

THE C4 NEWSLETTER

Summer 2015

Volume 23, Number 2



“NE” COUNTERSTAMPS – NEW, OLD, AND UNCERTAIN

Featured in this issue:

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- Two New Doctors
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- Early Coins in Arkansas
- Franklin and His Nature Prints
- Clipped Massachusetts Shillings
- Some New Haven History
- More on Counterfeit 8-Reales
- ANA Summer Seminar Notes
- C4/EAC Convention Notes
- EAC Convention Notes

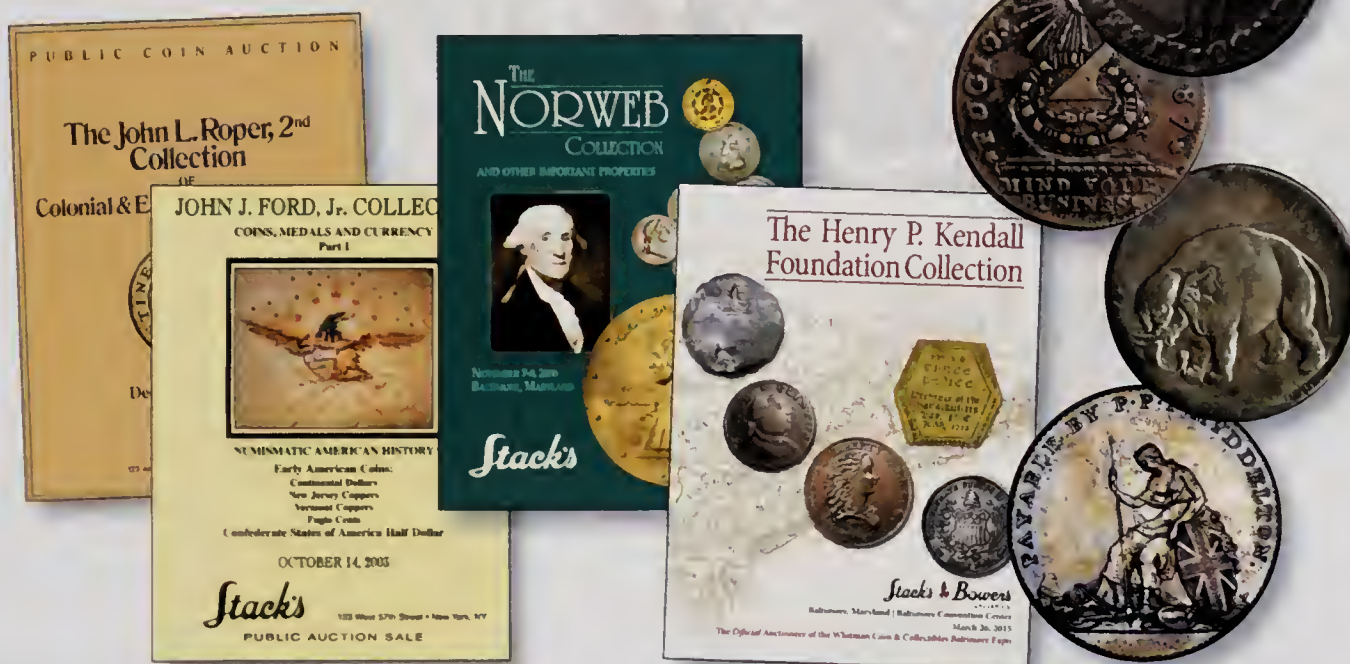


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Membership questions, address changes, and dues should be sent to Charlie Rohrer at P.O. Box 25, Mountville, PA 17554. Dues are \$30 regular (including 1st class mailing of the *Newsletter within the US*) and \$40 (for 1st class mailing outside the US); \$10 for junior members (under 18 residing in the US) and \$15 (under 19 residing outside the US).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE -- APRIL 2015

(Jim Rosen)

{PLEASE PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE INFORMATION IN BOLD}

Before you know it, our convention will be upon us. Although it is not for 4 months, we on the board have been busy preparing for it. **Again, it is going to be in Baltimore November 5-7th, at the Convention Center with the host hotel as the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel.** The show opens to the public on Thursday Nov 5th at 12 noon. Be sure to check our website, www.colonialcoins.org and/or the Whitman website www.whitmanexpo.com for details.

This year's convention will have a donated lots auction, occurring Thursday night just prior to our educational program. This is a very important fundraiser for our club. Please contact Jack Howes (his contact information is in the *Newsletter*) for any donations of coins, currency, numismatic books or other numismatically related material. Speaking about our educational program, our Educational Chairman, Jeff Lipksy, is organizing the Thursday evening program centered on Spanish Coins and Spanish Colonial Coins that circulated in Colonial America. We plan to have an overview of the topic, followed by in-depth lectures on Cobs, Pillars and Portrait coinage, and then wrapping up with a lecture on associated counterfeits. If there is a topic that you would like presented at our educational program, please contact me and we will certainly consider that topic for a future educational program.

As I mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, we are offering a new program this November revolving around informal grading and attribution of Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey and Fugio coppers. This function will occur at our gathering area where you can bring coins to be graded and attributed. There will be a limit of 10 coins per person. As of this writing, the times, grader and series are as follows but please check our convention program that you can get at our gathering area, as last minute changes might occur.

1. Craig McDonald – Connecticut Coppers, Thursday 1-3pm
2. Jim Rosen – Vermont Coppers, Thursday 3-5pm
3. Dick August – Fugio Coppers, Friday 12-2pm
4. Jack Howes – New Jersey Coppers, Friday 3-5pm

This outreach activity is going to be very informal. There will be no written grades. The main objective of this program is to aid new members in learning how to grade these coins, attribute them and also to review with members the nuances of grading Pre-federal coinage. Specific areas to be touched upon will include planchet issues, strike, surface characteristics and color of specific varieties. We hope that this pilot program will continue for years to come in benefiting the beginner to better understand the peculiarities inherent in this varied coinage.

As a reminder, Stacks-Bowers is our official auctioneer and if you have coins or currency that you would like to sell, please consider consigning them to our co-sponsored auction this November. The contact person for our auction is fellow C4 member Vicken Yegparian at Stacks-Bowers. He can be reached at 212-582-2580 or by email at vyegparian@stacksbowers.com.

Our new website should be up and running by the time you receive this *Newsletter*. The address is still the same, www.colonialcoins.org. We have just published Chris McDowell's new book, "Abel Buell and the History of the Connecticut and Fugio Coppers." This book will be available by the time you receive your *Newsletter* and also at the ANA. Having proofread this book, I can tell you it is a great book for the student of Connecticut Coppers, Fugio Coppers and those interested in pre-federal coinage. Like all of our books, this book can be obtained now from Charlie Davis by contacting him at 978-468-2933 or numislit@aol.com. Further, Syd Martin's third book, this time on French Colony coins, is just about ready to go to the printer and having proofread that book as well, this is definitely going to be the definitive reference work on the subject.

One last bit of news and that is that the 4 lectures presented at last year's C4/ANS COAC will not only be published in the *Newsletter*, as noted in the Spring *Newsletter*, but will also appear as a PDF on our website, so that new members as well as ANS members who are not C4 members can access them. Because of the length of Chris Salmon's lecture however, this will be published as a supplement to the July *Newsletter* rather than within the *Newsletter* itself.

So mark your calendar now and make plans to attend our November Convention in Baltimore, you will not be disappointed. New members please stop by and introduce yourself. Until then, stay well and continue to find fun with your hobby.

“NE” – THE ELUSIVE NEW ENGLAND COUNTERMARK

(Kenneth Bressett)

A Massachusetts Court Order was passed in 1672 authorizing the marking of full-weight Spanish pieces-of-eight with the letters “NE” to confirm their value as six New England shillings. Boston minters John Hull and Robert Sanderson were appointed to test and so mark coins that met the Court’s requirements for weight and purity.¹

A reference to this order became generally known to numismatists through publication in *An Historical Account of Massachusetts Currency* by Joseph B. Felt in 1839. Since that time researchers and collectors alike have hoped to locate examples of such coins to confirm adherence to the ordinance. In 1875 a second and even more widely circulated publication, *The Early Coins of America* by S. S. Crosby, also published the Act with Crosby’s personal comment: “We have been unable to find any coins proving this Act ever to have been put in execution, although we have long sought for them.”

Various opinions have been expressed over the years that either support or deny the existence of coins associated with this Act. A number of coins do exist with a persuasive “NE” counterstamp indicating they may have been made in compliance with the order. An equally convincing argument can be made for the improbability of those coins having a contemporary stamp. This paper examines each of the known specimens and presents as much factual data as is available in a quest to determine the authenticity of any of these pieces. Researching these controversial coins has been an ongoing and intriguing task of mine, and others, for many years.

¹ Massachusetts Records, vol. iv, page 7067. October 8, 1672:

“Whereas peeces of eight are of more value to Carry out of the Country then they will yield to mint into our Coyne, by reason whereof peeces of eight, which might else Come to Coyning, are carrjed out of the Country, It is therefore Ordered by this Court & the authority thereof, that all peeces of eight that are full weight & good silver, that is sixe shillings of new England money, of mexico, sivil & pillar, & so all lesser peeces of each Sort shall passe in this Jurisdiction as Current as our ovne money; peeces of eight at sixe shillings a peece, and all lesser peeces proportionably there vnto: Provided that all such peeces that shall passe in this Jurisdiction haue a stampe affixt vpon them, wch shall be NE: to euidence they are of right allay, and due weight; and that m^r John Hull & m^r Robert Saunde^rson, or either of them, be the persons for the tryall & stamping of such money, & that therby fower pence vpon the pound paid for the rest, one fowerth thereof to the officer & the rest to the Country Tresurer.

“whereas peeces of eight, weighing sixe shillings, are ordered to passe for sixe shillings, & ordered to be stamped, &c., according to the sajd law, refference thereto being had; and for as much as few or no peeces of eight are of that weight, and so the intent of Good to the Country therein will be disappointed, as an addition to the sajd lawe. Be it ordered & enacted by this Court & the authority thereof, that peeces of eight vnder the weight of sixe shillings shall likewise be passable for so much of New England money as they shall weigh, and that it be impressed vpon the stampe how much each peece doth weigh, in legible figures, wth the other letters on y^e same, & of the same Alloy.”

CURRENCY IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND

The economic climate of the early English colonies in America was somewhat unstable and hampered by the prevailing mercantile system intended to increase the homeland's wealth by government regulation of all of the nation's commercial interests. Under that system imports of items necessary to the colonies were paid in precious metals thus draining their economy of much of their gold and silver. Any "hard money" available to the colonists was obtained from their exports of lumber, hides, tobacco, fish and other goods, but was quickly diminished because of their deficit trade balance.

Within the colonies trade was most often carried on by a system of barter, credit, or "country pay" involving produce, goods, or livestock. The limited amount of coins actually in circulation consisted mostly of Spanish or Spanish-American *reales*, English silver and copper, Dutch, French and Portuguese silver and gold. In 1652 this was supplemented by a small amount of silver coins made in Massachusetts. In an effort to prevent those coins from being exported they contained about 22% less silver than their English counterparts.

Despite this remedy, much of the available silver was sent to England as bullion because it was valued higher there than its assigned worth as coined money in the colonies. The high cost of converting foreign coins and bullion into New England shillings, sixpence, and threepence coins far outweighed the convenience of using a local currency. A law passed in Massachusetts in 1654 attempted to restrict anyone from leaving the province with more than 20 Bay Colony shillings. The Massachusetts Court Order of 1672 required that Spanish pieces-of-eight should be tested for weight and fineness and if found to be up to a proper standard they should be stamped with the letters "NE"; and likewise any underweight silver coins should be stamped with their weight and fineness. Unfortunately none of these precautions prevented the drain of silver flowing out of the colony to take advantage of their value as bullion.

There is no evidence that any of the silver coins of that period were ever stamped in accordance with the ordinance. Indeed there was no pressing reason to do so and no convenient means of doing so. The Act of 1672 setting the value of eight-real coins at six shillings remained in effect until 1683 and effectively removed any incentive for having those coins converted to Massachusetts shillings, or counterstamped with any sort of markings.

The practicality of Massachusetts silver coins was drawing to a close spurred on by the exorbitant cost of operating the mint. A reduction in the coining fees paid to the minters John Hull and Robert Sanderson for their work was helpful, but would have been offset by perhaps even greater fees incurred by them, or others, for testing and marking foreign silver coins. John Hull's log of minting operations during that period made no mention of testing or counterstamping any coins. He thereafter directed his efforts to other concerns and became a member of the General Court's lower house and served as Treasurer of the Bay Colony from 1676 to 1680. The mint finally ceased operation in 1682 for practical reasons

as well as being an irritant to the King, and colonial coinage was soon replaced by various issues of paper currency.

An additional indication of how light-weight coins were treated at that time in New England is provided by the discovery of the weight-adjusted Spanish-American coins that were found among the stash recovered from the shipwrecked *HMS Feversham* in the 1980s, which will be described forthwith.

THE HOARD EVIDENCE

The most straightforward means of verifying that the conditions of the Massachusetts Court Order of 1672 were ever carried out would be to locate examples of any “NE” counterstamped coins in confirmed hoards of the period. Unfortunately there are very few American hoards to offer evidence. The most likely of these were those found in Castine, Maine; Roxbury, Massachusetts; and the *Feversham* ship wreck. Each of these contained a significant assortment of coins of the period that were undoubtedly in use in the New England area from 1652 to 1682. They included Massachusetts silver coins dated 1652, Spanish-American eight-real pieces and various other foreign silver dollar-sized coins.

There are several detailed accounts of the Castine Hoard.² The oldest dates to its discovery in 1840-1841, and was published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* on July 17, 1841. Another report was published by the Maine Historical Society in 1859. An additional account is given in *The Castine Deposit: An American Hoard*, by Sydney P. Noe, 1942 (ANS NNM #100).

The Castine hoard was discovered by Capt. Stephen Grindle in a rocky deposit close to the bay's edge. It contained several dozen Massachusetts silver tree coins and issues from England, France, Spain and Spanish-America, Holland and Portugal. A 1690 French silver *demi-écu* from the Bordeaux Mint established the *terminus post quem*. Sydney P. Noe, in his book posited that the burial of the deposit was about 1704.

² An article on the discovery of the coins found in Castine was published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 17, 1841, that was reprinted from the *Belfast Signal*:

“Most of these coins, valuable to collectors, found in Castine, were purchased by John Warren, dealer in marine shells, minerals, paintings, engravings, gems, coins, and other articles of antiquity. He was an Englishman, at one time a wealthy brewer, and kept his carriage, but becoming reduced in property, came to Boston with a small stock of coins, shells, &c. He established himself on Tremont Street, in an old building, afterwards removed, in the erection of the Museum. He was there in 1840 — I cannot tell how much sooner -- and it is likely was the first dealer in old coins in Boston, and perhaps in the U. S. He removed from Tremont Street to 293 Washington Street, up-stairs, where he continued till his death, which happened a few years since, when his whole collection was sold, at private sale, to some Institution. I believe in Connecticut. (His price for the Pine-tree shilling was \$1.) Most of the collectors in this vicinity have more or less of them in their collections.”

One account of this hoard estimated that nearly 2,000 coins were found; another said 500. The lesser figure seems more accurate. Capt. Stephen Grindle and his son Samuel discovered the cache on the family farm and recovered the scattered coins over a period of several months. Many of the pieces were immediately disposed of by Capt. Grindle for their bullion value. Some of the more attractive pieces included 30 to 50 1652-dated Massachusetts silver coins; they are said to have been sold to Dr. Joseph L. Stevens of Castine who later donated several of these coins to the Maine Historical Society.

The most extensive and authoritative report of this hoard is in a paper published by the Maine Historical Society in 1859, and reprinted by the Castine Scientific Society in the *Wilson Museum Bulletin* of Summer 2003, Vol. 4. No 25. 18 coins representative of the hoard are illustrated in this article where it says that “the next largest proportion consisted of the clumsy, shapeless Spanish coinage commonly called ‘cob money’.” An account of the dates shown on these pieces specifies “78”, “82”, (*ie.*, 1678 and 1682), and the full dates 1657 and 1659 on 8-*Reales* pieces. In the lengthy description of coins known to have been in the hoard there is no mention of any Spanish-American piece-of-eight dated 1652, and no account of any countermarked coins.

The so-called “Roxbury Hoard” was probably hidden in the late 17th century and discovered in 1863. It contained a reported 28 Massachusetts silver coins of various denominations dated 1652. The group may have been a personal possession lost or buried in the period 1675 to 1682 as evidenced by the coin types showing relatively little wear. There was no Spanish-American or other silver coins in the group.

An additional grouping of coins important to understanding the currency of 17th century Massachusetts came to light in 1996 with the discovery of the shipwrecked *HMS Feversham* off the coast of Scaterie Island, 20 miles from Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. The warship ran aground on October 7, 1711 with the loss of over 100 lives during a voyage from New York City to the Gulf of St. Laurence. She was carrying among her cargo a significant quantity of gold and silver coins intended as payroll for British forces by Admiral Walker who was preparing to attack Quebec. The coins on-board had been secured when the frigate put into New York harbor for needed stores. Being low on cash for the payroll the officer in charge scoured the city for available coins. Thus the entire group consisted of coins then in everyday use in New York City.

The assortment that contained more than 2,000 silver coins was a cross-section of foreign and Spanish-American pieces and 90 old Massachusetts coins dated 1652 (but minted until 1682). The bulk of these coins were subsequently sold at auction January 12-13, 1999 by Stack’s of New York City. A somewhat surprising find in the cache were numerous examples of Spanish-American cob coins that had been plugged and adjusted to bring their weight up to standard. Fourteen 8-*real* and two 4-*real* coins of this type were in the hoard; some later appearing in the Edward Roehrs collection from an auction by Coin Galleries of New York, April 15, 1998, and later sold in the Dix Noonan Webb auction of November 17, 2011.



Example of a weight-adjusted 8 real cob with silver adjustment plug.

The importance of these weight-adjusted pieces cannot be ignored as they previously had been unknown to have been used in the New England area and were a remedy for using coins that were known to be underweight. In a related effort many of the *HMS Feversham* coins had been cut into fractions to facilitate trade. None of the silver coins in this recovery were marked with the weight or with a “NE” counterstamp.

These hoards are prime examples of the kinds and varieties of coins that circulated in the Massachusetts Bay area during the time when the intrinsic value of silver coins was of concern to those who were fortunate enough to have, or use them in trade. The Act of 1672 was passed in an effort to keep all acceptable foreign coins in circulation in the colony and prevent their being melted or exported. None of those attempts were practical or successful because by then most Spanish eight-real coins were nominally passing at six shillings regardless of their weight.

WHAT THEN ARE THE KNOWN “NE” COUNTERSTAMPED COINS?

Various opinions have been offered in explanation of the eight or more coins that are stamped with a prominent “NE” mark. The earliest report of a “NE” counterstamped coin was in an article written by well known collector Matthew Stickney and published in 1860. In his persuasive account Stickney claimed to own such a coin and described it in detail without sighting from whom it was obtained. A detailed account of this is presented here under the record of the coin termed “A.” It offers compelling evidence of the existence of a genuine coin meeting the requirements of the Massachusetts Act of 1672. Yet no such coin has ever been reported or unmistakably described elsewhere, and there exists no indisputable evidence that Stickney ever possessed such a coin. None was included with his “entire collection” when it was sold at auction in 1907.

The fact that all presently known specimens first appeared on the market in the early 1950s, and seemingly came from a single source, raises questions about their origin. Inconsistencies are also seen in the types of coins that are so marked in that some of them are “royal” or “presentation” coins that would scarcely have been found in circulation at that time. Three such coins in the group are examples valued more as “presentation pieces” than as counterstamped coins. Each of the other coins with the “NE” marking are high

grade examples of choice Spanish-American “cob” coins, Spanish, and Netherlands coins. This abnormality might be explained by the fact that while coins of this quality were not generally available in the mid-seventeenth century they were not particularly rare or valuable collector’s coins in 1950.

The style or form of the “NE” stamp has been questioned by some as not being close in form to the original NE shillings of 1652. There seems to be no reason to doubt that the form might not be different than something used twenty years previously and more suited for a different use. Of greater significance is the fact that a circular punch was used that conforms exactly in size and form to that of the ubiquitous “sun over mountains” counterstamp of Guatemala used circa 1840, and will be considered forthwith.

While defacing otherwise choice numismatic specimens at any time seems tragic, the technique of overstriking employed is simple and could be done easily by anyone with a few basic tools. An example of how this can be done was brilliantly depicted in an article by Raymond Williams published in the Spring 2013 issue of the *C4 Newsletter*. At my request Mr. Williams has used his equipment to counterstamp an example of how this would look on the modern one-ounce silver round illustrated here as compared to the NE on a genuine New England shilling of 1652 and one of the “NE” coins under discussion.



In light of the facts that there was no crying need for coins to be counterstamped in 1672 or later; and the improbability of a single stamp lasting in use for ten years; and that there was no cost-effective way to stamp light-weight coins at that time, it becomes highly problematical that the ordinance was ever carried out, and far more likely that the pieces under consideration are merely modern concoctions.

LINEAGE OF SPECIMENS

A. Potosí. 8 reales 1652 E. (26.44g)^a. Presentation strike.

It is unknown if this coin ever existed.

Described by Stickney as “17 pennyweights.”

This coin was reportedly owned by Matthew A. Stickney, and was fully described by him in his article published in the *Essex Institute Journal* vol. II. 33, printed in 1860³. In that article Stickney stated that this coin was obtained by him directly from a hoard of 17th century coins found in Castine, Maine, in 1840, but did not disclose how. In his account of this coin Stickney indicated that the piece is counterstamped with the letters “NE” in the first quarter of the shield on the obverse. He refers at length to the Massachusetts Court Order of October 8, 1672, that authorized coins of full weight and fineness to be marked so that they could pass at the value of six shillings.

Matthew Stickney was arguably the leading coin collector of his time. His collection contained examples of many of the rarest American coins, including the Brasher doubloon and 1804 silver dollar. His “NE” counterstamped coin was described as being “the most valuable (and perhaps unique) coin in my collection.” Upon his death on August 11, 1894, his entire coin collection passed to his daughter, and was sold with great fanfare at auction by the firm of Henry Chapman in June 1907.

³“From the parcel of coins found at Castine, I obtained at the time, many fine specimens of France, Spain and the Pine-tree money, and one of them, I have always considered the most valuable (and perhaps unique,) in my collection, a piece of eight, coined at the mint of Potosi, 1652. It will be seen from the description I shall give of it, that the second coinage of the Massachusetts money, as regards the beaded circles, enclosing the legend and device, and the Anno before the date, are nearly the same as on the New England coins, showing that it might have been, in those respects, a pattern for their coins. I do not know of the Anno being placed before the date on any other coins. It is also a very interesting coin in another respect, being stamped with NE., showing it to be one of the last issues of the silver currency of Massachusetts, ordered to be issued by the Court, Oct. 8, 1672.

“The coin in my possession, weighs 17 pennyweights, the weight required, and is in a fine state of preservation, having the appearance of being coined by powerful machinery. This Piastre of eight Reales, Plate Currency (called on that account of a piece of eight,) has on its obverse, near its edge, a beaded circle to prevent clipping, the legend, “PHILIPPUS IIII. D. G. HISPANIARVIM REX,†”. In its field a shield surmounted by a regal coronet, first and third quarters, castles, the Arms of Castile, second and fourth, Lions, the Arms of Leon, in a bend at the base of the shield, Pomegranate, the Arms of Granada; on the left the Arabic numeral 8, its value, and on the right of the shield, 52, an abbreviation of its date. There are other marks, which I am not able to explain. On the first quarter of the shield appears the stamp N.E., similar to that on the first coinage of N. E. money, a beaded circle encloses the field of the coin’s reverse, the beaded circles, the same as on the obverse, legend, E L. PERV † POTOSI ANNO, 1652. In the field, two upright pillars, with coronets, instead of capitols, and above them a regal coronet; at their base flows a representation of the Mediterranean Sea, and across the coin the inscription “PLVS VLTRA” (more beyond). The pillars are supposed to represent the Pillars of Hercules. The Arabic numeral 8 is between the coronets, its value, IIII on the right of the shield, the reigning king, and other marks not easy to explain.”

The Chapman auction, however, did not include any coin marked with a “NE” counterstamp. It did contain a 1652 Potosí 8 reales coin that was obviously a presentation strike and described in the catalog as: Lot 2763. “Holed near edge. Counter stamped with small die of sun and mountains”.

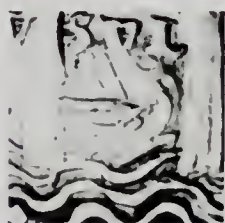
A photographic illustration of the reverse of the coin is shown, but not the obverse. This coin is recorded here as **No. 1**, and ownership is traced subsequent to the 1907 Chapman auction. It now shows a “NE” counterstamp and a hole! The coincidence of these being two very similar but vastly different coins is beyond explanation.

Whether Stickney owned such a coin remains unanswered as no such coin has since been reported. If he did own it he never revealed it to his friend S.S. Crosby even though he was a collaborator with that author and shared information and pictures of many of his coins for publication in *Early Coins of America*, 1875. When referring to the 1672 Act and such coins Crosby states: “We have been unable to find any coins proving this Act ever to have been put in execution, although we have long sought for them.”

The coin illustrated in the 1907 Chapman auction catalog of the Stickney collection was described as having a Sun and Mountain countermark that would have been applied for use in Guatemala circa 1840. It clearly shows a hole that was nowhere noted in Stickney’s 1860 account of his coin. A description of this piece is given here in coin listing **No.1**.



- Detail of the NE C/S now on the coin from the Stickney sale showing a trace of an outer rim, similar to that seen on typical Guatemala Sun over Mountain counterstamp.



- Detail of anvil impression on reverse before and after the forged NE C/S was applied.



1. Potosí. 8 reales 1652 E. 25.99g. Presentation strike, holed. Calbeto 1038. Ex: Henry Chapman auction June 1907, lot #2763.

This coin has long been presumed to be from the Matthew Stickney collection and acquired by him directly from the Castine, Maine deposit discovered in 1840. Stickney's original coin collection included what he called a "1652 royal eight *reales* coin with a N.E. countermark attributed to the Massachusetts ordinance of 1672." Stickney's entire collection was consigned for auction by Henry Chapman in his 1907 sale. The catalog listing of lot 2763 described this coin as "Holed near edge. Counter stamped with small die of sun and mountains." The piece is illustrated therewith a single photograph of the reverse. The buyer was collector Joseph S. Jenks.

The next appearance of this piece was in the Chapman auction of the John Story Jenks* collection December 7-17, 1921, Lot #7158, where it is described there as "Holed right, at edge. C.s. in small punch, sun and mountains, possibly by Costa Rica and about 1900." It is not illustrated. The piece was purchased by Henry Chapman for \$11.50.

Subsequently this piece, now described as having a N.E. counterstamp, was sold in the Henry Christensen auction December 10-11, 1976 as lot #886 for \$775.00. Christensen told me he thought the consigner was John M. Willem but was uncertain of it. This coin is illustrated in *Reales de a Ocho* by José Luís Lázaro 1996. The most recent appearance of this specimen at auction was in the May 10, 2005 sale by Cayón Subastas, lot #5035. There it is described as having a N.E. counterstamp, and "Hay quien los ha atribuido a New England" (Some have attributed it to New England).

*John Story Jenks. (1839-1923). He began collecting about 1850. His collection was sold at auction by Henry Chapman December 7-17, 1921. The sale contained 7300 lots offered over ten days.



2. Potosí. 8 reales 1667 E. 26.67g. Presentation strike, holed. Calbeto 1067.

Ex: Henry Christensen auction December 5-6, 1975, lot number 572 (where it is pictured). At this sale the coin brought \$700 on an \$800 mail bid. Henry Christensen told me he believed this was consigned by John M. Willem,* who also owned the “Stickney” coin (see No. 1). This coin is illustrated in *Reales de a Ocho* by José Luís Lázaro 1996, as is the “Stickney” coin, with the sole comment “Countermarked NE.”

*John M. Willem, Jr. (1909-1979). Collector, author. Milwaukee, WI. ANS Fellow. Served on U.S. Assay Commission 1957. Author of *The United States Trade Dollar: America's Only Unwanted, Unhonored Coin* 1959.

Henry Christensen and son William B. Christensen conducted 97 auction sales 1955 to 1988.



3. Potosí. 8 reales 1663 E. 27.43g. Cob style. Calbeto 1059.

Chicago dealer Ruth Green sold this coin to collector Earl Brown of Chicago 2/1/1956. When Brown* died c.1961 his friend Glenn B. Smedley attempted to sell it. It eventually went to James Nester who donated it to the ANS in 1991. When questioned, Howard Gibbs told me he was sure this piece had the same counterstamp as all the other known pieces. He never said how he knew something that I was only able to confirm much later after examining all of the known specimens. I examined and photographed this coin in 1960. It is now held permanently in the collection of the American Numismatic Society where it is acknowledged to be a genuine cob coin stamped with a fake “NE” countermark that was applied in modern times. This piece is illustrated in *Money of the American Colonies and Confederation* by Philip L. Mossman, 1992, where it is described as having a fake “NE” counterstamp.

*Earl C. Brown. (circa 1900-1961) Chicago, IL purchased this coin from Ruth Green, dba R. Green, a prominent Skokie dealer in business until 1959. Brown reportedly owned a second specimen but never showed it to me.



4. Potosí. 8 reales 1659 E. 26.01 g. Presentation strike. Three dates. Calbeto 1052. Holed, later plugged. It was not plugged when first shown in 1951.

Ex: Hans M. F. Schulman's Howard Gibbs auction 4/26-28/1951, Lot #201 @ \$36 on a \$30 estimate. It was described as "CSPD NE". This coin was sent to me for photography by Howard Gibbs in 1961. He owned it then and at least until 1963, when he said he was trying to buy yet another specimen. It was purchased by William Cruikshank* in 1972 from Douglas Weaver of SouthWest Coins, where it was described as "c/s NE unknown." Cruikshank still had the piece in 1979. He died in 2013. Later sold at auction by Daniel Frank Sedwick, LLC 11/6/2014, Lot 605 @ \$4,112.50 to "SoledayStaTeresa." Described there as "with mysterious 'NE' countermark (possibly New England, 1650s)".

*William H. Cruikshank (1927-2013). Collector. Ipswich, MA. Enjoyed reading about American history and was particularly interested in Ipswich history. The relationship between Hans M. F. Schulman and Howard Gibbs is discussed elsewhere.



5. Potosí. 8 reales (1679-1684) V.Cob style. Unrecorded. The apparent "73" date is misleading because assayer Pedro de Villar was not appointed until 1679. Double striking may account for this illusion, or it may have been a die maker's error.

The most likely actual date is 1683, and it could not have been officially marked after the Massachusetts mint was closed in 1682! Howard Gibbs told me in correspondence that he purchased this piece in January 1961, and that it was previously in the Hans Schulman 1951 auction; however, it was not in that sale. He sent it to me for photography in 1961. Its present whereabouts is unknown.

B. Potosí. 8 reales 1682. Unknown if this coin ever existed.

In personal correspondence Howard Gibbs told me he once owned this coin. He also stated that he believed “two foreign pieces were in the Boston or New England area c.1963, and that one was sold by Lou Werner* some time before 1960” (Perhaps nos. 7 & 8).

* Louis S. Werner (1894-1982). Coin dealer. New York City. A promoter who capitalized on historic events and produced a souvenir for the Admiral Byrd expedition and the Morro Castle disaster.



6. Spain, Segovia. 8 reales 1617. Philip III. 26.96g. Yriarte. 70.

Ex: Hans Schulman auction of Gibbs coins April 26-28, 1951, Lot #9 @ \$40, where it is described as “Counterstamped NE as on New England coins,” sold to Clyde Grimm* who first showed it to me in 1960. Grimm told me at that time: “The ANS does not regard it very highly, but it does represent the intent of the General Court Order of 1672.” It was sold to Richard Picker in August 1966. It later appeared in Stack’s auction 11/7/1990 as Lot #2548 @ \$170. The current (2015) owner is William Snyder, who considers that the NE counterstamp stands for New England. This piece is shown in *John Hull, The Mint and the Economics of Massachusetts Coinage* by Louis Jordan 2002, where the counterstamp is said to be a nineteenth century addition.

* Clyde L. Grimm (1890- c.1961). Collector. Chicago, IL. President of Chicago Coin Club. 1953-1954. Honored with Medal of Merit in 1955. He allowed me to photograph this coin in 1960. H. D. Gibbs also owned specimens nos. 4 and 5, and possibly one dated 1682 at one time.



7. Netherlands, Artois. 1624. Philip III. 27.52 g. Silver *patagon*. Delmonte 298.

This piece was shown to me by Eric Newman* in 1979. I examined and photographed it previously in 1961 when it was in a Chicago collection but have no record of the owner at that time. On this specimen traces of a previous counterstamp can be seen above the “NE” stamp.

*Eric P. Newman. (b. 5/25/1911). Numismatist, researcher, author. St. Louis, MO. He began collecting at age nine with an 1859 cent received from his grandfather. Founder of the Eric P. Newman Education Society. He served as chairman of the U. S. Assay Commission in 1967. In 1986 he was inducted into the ANA Numismatic Hall of Fame. He is a member of the Rittenhouse Society, the ANA, and a Fellow of the American Numismatic Society.



8. Netherlands, Deventer. 1662. Silver *ducat*. Delmonte 990.

This coin was photographed by me sometime around 1961. I have no additional information or any record of its lineage. It is very likely one of the “foreign” pieces reported by Gibbs to have been sold by Louis G. Werner before 1960 to someone in the New England area. (see listing B)

SUMMARY

Much of the information in this article has been gathered by the author through personal interviews and correspondence with many of the original owners of these coins. Only a few other sources have commented on the “NE” stamps over the years. The first were published in *NUMISMA* 1955 and 1956 where Walter Breen answered a series of questions from Richard Kenny and others. Breen, one of the most prolific numismatic researchers at that time, did not consider the punch mark genuine then, or later in his article in the 1976 ANS publication *Studies on Money in Early America*. Other investigators in more recent times have all arrived at the same negative conclusion and have rejected the punch marks as being connected with the original Massachusetts Act of 1672. The very few others who have considered the countermark to possibly be original have failed to provide any significant evidence of their being contemporary with the ordinance.

Among the people most closely connected with the earliest known appearance of these mysterious coins are coin dealer Hans M. F. Schulman and collector Howard Gibbs. Both were associated with the sales of five or more of the eight known pieces. Neither ever published a record of where those coins were first obtained.

Hans Schulman operated his coin auction business in New York City from 1950 to 1977. In 1971 he formed the Schulman Coin and Mint, Inc. A biography of Howard Gibbs (1895-c.1970) appears in the first of the four major Gibbs sales conducted by Schulman (October 1970) and says he began collecting at age 7 in 1902. By 1930 Gibbs was actively collecting Cut and Counterstamped coins and Odd & Curious Currency, reportedly since about 1910. Gibbs obtained an example of the Yap Island stone money by claiming to represent the Pittsburgh Numismatic Museum -- the address of which was his own home. He contacted Pennsylvania Senator David Reed, who contacted the Japanese ambassador in Washington (Yap Island was then under the control of the Japanese), and Gibbs was sent an example of the stone money -- at the expense of the Japanese Foreign Office! He was one-time owner of at least three of the “NE” coins under discussion.

Collector Matthew A. Stickney, the first to claim ownership of a coin marked with NE in accordance with the Act of 1672 was born in Rowley, Massachusetts in 1805 and died in 1894. He began coin collecting in 1823 after receiving a large amount of Continental Currency from his grandfather. He had friendly relations with Eckfeldt and Dubois at the mint and in 1843 traded an "Immune Columbia" gold piece to the mint for an 1804 dollar. ("An honorable exchange" Eric Newman said, "he traded a gold restrike he had made up and had no respect for and the Mint traded an artificial 1804 dollar which the Mint recently made up and had no respect for.") He assisted Crosby with *Early Coins of America* yet never told him about the “NE” coin that he once said was the rarest piece in his collection. His collection was sold by Henry Chapman at auction in 1907.

The original New England coins authorized by the Act of 1652 were specifically marked simply NE. They were made for a few months and a new design was designated thereafter that called for an appropriate legend and tree to be shown on all coins. The Act of 1672 related to an entirely different situation dealing with the light-weight Peruvian cobs

that were becoming a problem. It intended to restrict their use by stamping the good eight-real pieces with “NE”. Unfortunately the cost of stamping them outweighed the difference in value.

CONCLUSIONS

Questions remain concerning precisely when and by whom these mysterious coins were marked with the “NE” counterstamp that presumably stands for New England. There is no indication that any such were ever made in accordance with the Massachusetts Act of 1672, or indeed any need for them to have been made, and no record of any irrefutable surviving contemporary specimen. The 1860 Essex article written by Stickney is baffling as to what may have happened to his coin, or if such a coin ever existed.

The preponderance of evidence available concerning these coins points clearly to their not being a product of the seventeenth century at a time when certification was expensive and scarcely needed. Coins of the quality of the known pieces now showing the “NE” counterstamp were unlikely to have been in circulation in New England at that time and if they were there was little need to validate their value by any means. Evidence provided by the so-called Stickney specimen must be a matter held in contention until such a coin is discovered and authenticated. It has either been lost or never existed.

The fact that most known specimens are from a single source in their discovery and initial sales to collectors is unsettling. Descriptions of these coins when offered for sale and statements by the original owners, never presented them as genuine coins counterstamped in accordance with the Massachusetts Act.

Exactly when these pieces were made, why they were made, and by whom may never be known. The most reasonable scenario points to their being fabricated sometime in the early twentieth century as examples of what such coins may have looked like if any were ever made. The overwhelming consensus is that all of the presently known specimens are genuine coins, but the reality is that the “NE” counterstamp on them is a modern addition.

Related Resources:

A Historical Account of Massachusetts Currency. Joseph B. Felt. 1839.

Essex Institute Journal Vol. II. 33. Matthew A. Stickney. 1860.

The Early Coins of America. S.S. Crosby. 1875.

The Castine Deposit: An American Hoard. Sydney P. Noe. ANS 1942.
Numismatic Notes and Monographs #100.

Diccionario de la Moneda Hispanoamericana. Humberto Burzío. 1958

Compendium VIII Reales. Gabriel Calbeto de Grau. 1970.

Money of the American Colonies and Confederation. Philip L. Mossman. ANS 1993. Numismatic Studies #20.

Reales de a Ocho: Los redondos de Lima, Méjico y Potosí y otras acuñaciones especiales. José Luís Lázaro. 1996

The Practical Book of Cobs. Daniel Sedwick and Frank Sedwick. Fourth edition 2007.

DR. ERIK GOLDSTEIN AND DR. JOHN KRALJEVICH

(Ray Williams)

Our very own Erik Goldstein (middle left) and John Kraljevich (middle right) received honorary Doctorates in Numismatics from the ANA's Florence Schook School of Numismatics. Presenting the diplomas are Rod Gillis (far left) and ANA President Walter Ostromecki (far right). The honors were bestowed at the ANA Awards Banquet June 24, 2015. John & Erik were instructors at the first session of the ANA Summer Seminar, teaching a course about Numismatic Paper of Early America. So let us not forget to address them by their proper titles when we meet or communicate with them.



Image courtesy of ANA, Robert Kelley photographer.

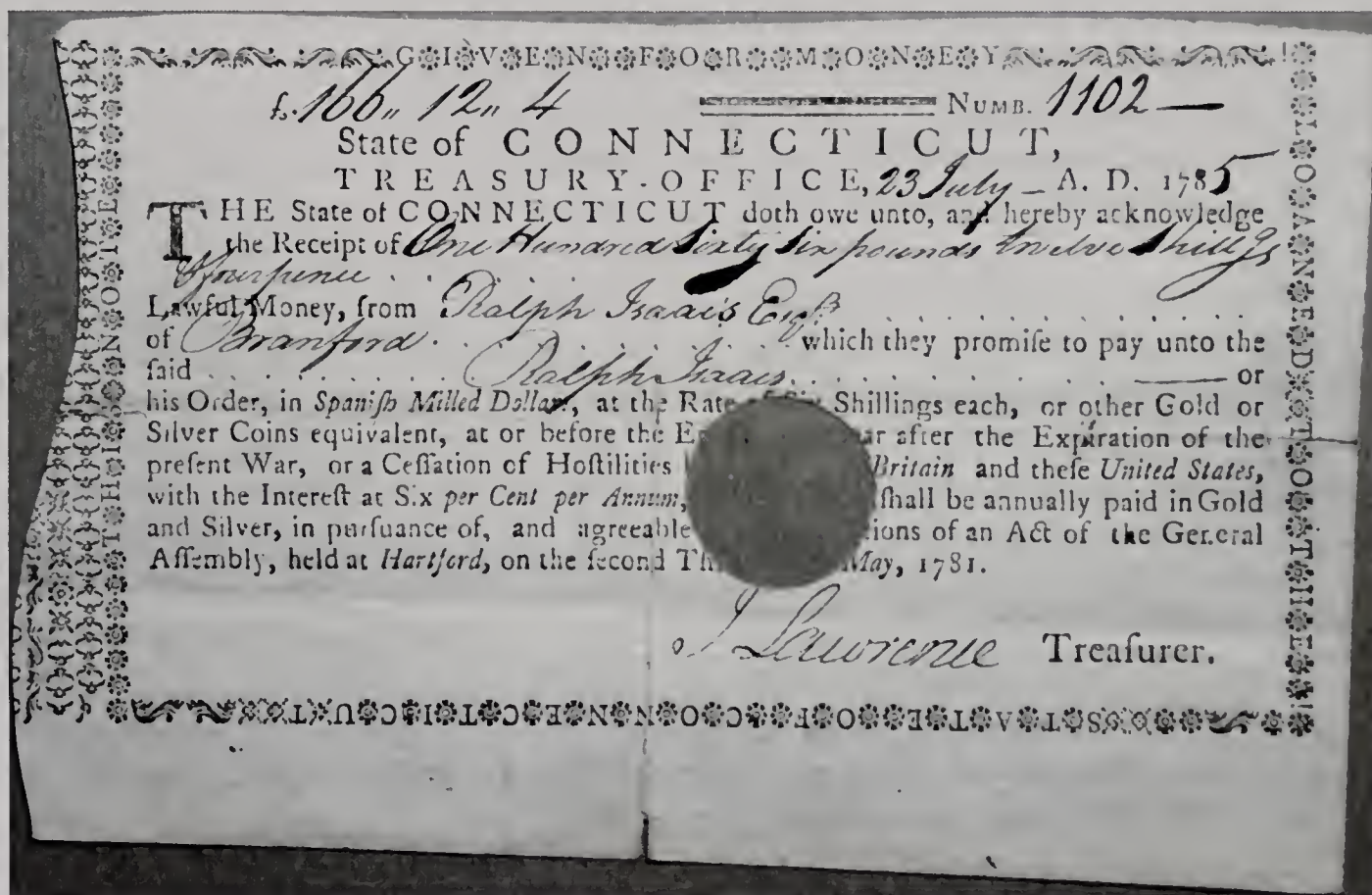
A PIECE OF NEW HAVEN HISTORY

(Randy Clark)

In November 1977, noted Connecticut coppers researcher Norman Bryant published an excellent article on the Samuel Broome house in New Haven, associated with both Fugio and Connecticut copper mints (see *The Colonial Newsletter*, volume 16, number 3). Samuel Broome had purchased the house from its original owner and builder, Ralph Isaacs.

Isaacs was a Yale (1761) educated merchant, living in New Haven starting officially in 1763. The Isaacs house was built sometime between 1770 and 1771, per land records. Ralph Isaacs was considered a Tory by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1776 and "marooned" until 1778, when he took an oath of fidelity to the United States. After selling his home to Broome for £1,300 in 1784, Isaacs retired to "Cherry Hill" in Branford, Connecticut, where he lived until he died in October 1799. The Bryant article has substantial detail on Isaacs and his house, and still more information is available in Bryant's New Haven investigation archives.

In a recent currency auction, the following Connecticut Treasury Certificate was acquired – once owned by Ralph Isaacs from 1785 to 1799. This "Lawrence" certificate, named after the active treasurer at the time, John Lawrence (active 1769-1789), was documenting a loan to the State of Connecticut by Isaacs of £ 166/12/4 (166 pounds, 12 shillings, 4 pence), bearing an interest of 6% per year.



£ 166 .. 12 .. 4

Numb. 1102

State of CONNECTICUT
TREASURY OFFICE, 23 July A. D. 1785

The State of CONNECTICUT doth owe unto, and hereby acknowledge
the Receipt of One Hundred Sixty Six pounds twelve Shillings
& four pence
Lawful Money, from Ralph Isaacs, Esq
of Branford which they promise to pay unto the
said Ralph Isaacs or
his Order, in Spanish Milled Dollars, at the Rate of Six Shillings each, or other Gold or
Silver Coins equivalent, at or before the End of the Year after Expiration of the
present War, or a Cessation of Hostilities, between Great Britain and these United States,
with the Interest at Six per Cent per Annum, which Interest shall be annually paid in Gold
and Silver, of pursuance of, and agreeable to the Directions of an Act of the General
Assembly, held at Hartford, on the Second Thursday of May, 1781.

J Lawrence Treasurer.

Certificate Outline: THIS NOTE GIVEN FOR MONEY LOANED TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

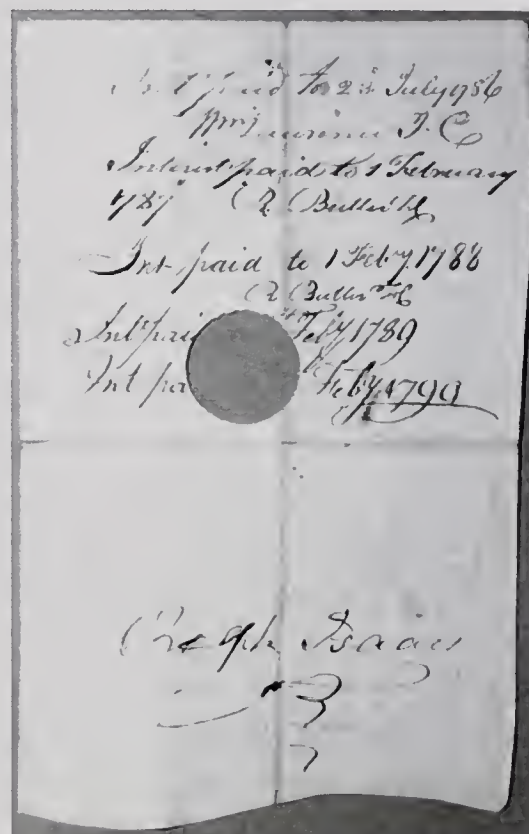
These interest bearing certificates were periodically turned in to the Connecticut Treasury representative to collect on the 6% annual interest payment. As can be seen, Isaacs or his representative actively collected on the interest payments from July 1786 to February 1799. The hole punched in the document is a cancellation mark, indicating the certificate was terminated at some point, with the return of Isaacs' original £166/12/4 investment. Note that Isaacs passed in October 1799 – at the age of 59.

It is my opinion the crude signature on the back is that of Ralph Isaacs, himself – whereas the front could possibly be that of Isaacs or the Treasurer, John Lawrence, when the interest certificate was filled out.

Notice the 1785 date of origination filled in by hand, but the printed May 1781 date on the lower certificate and the close linkage with the “the present War, or a Cessation of Hostilities, between Great Britain and these United States.” This type of certificate had been in use often during the war years, and apparently found use in the years afterwards, as well.

As an aside, Ralph Isaacs' daughter, Grace, married New Haven's Jonathan Ingersoll – an important Connecticut Mint financier. The Ingersolls were a colorful couple, but that is another story, for another time.

It's fun to see pieces of history go by which were handled by players directly, or indirectly, associated with Connecticut mint history.



C4 AND COLONIALS AT THE 2015 EARLY AMERICAN COPPERS CONVENTION

Dallas, Texas; April 30 – May 3, 2015

(Craig McDonald)

The 2015 Early American Coppers (aka, EAC) Convention returned to the D/FW area this year. The last time EAC was here was in 2008. It was held at the same hotel as last time, the Sheraton right outside the north side of DFW International Airport. It is a very nice facility. The bourse was large and not at all crowded. There was a large gathering area right outside the bourse, as well as a hospitality room with coffee and other beverages throughout the day. The Convention Committee did a fabulous job.

Wednesday, there was a behind-the-scenes tour of Heritage's Headquarters, located just outside of downtown Dallas. I wasn't officially on vacation Wednesday but decided to play hooky and drive down from my home, about 30 miles north of their location. I forgot just how "joyful" an experience rush-hour traffic into a major metropolitan area could be. Nevertheless I made it in time.

The folks from Heritage were extremely welcoming and split us up into two groups for the tour with a dedicated guide. My group first toured the area where they handle Americana and Space memorabilia. They had some items out for us to see and touch, like a lock of George Washington's hair, an extremely rare (possibly unique) 1864 Lincoln campaign flag, several items that flew on the Apollo 11 and Apollo 13 missions....and one item we couldn't touch..... an RMS Titanic dinner menu from April 14, 1912....the evening it went down. Next we moved on to the Sports area where we were shown some extremely rare and very high grade baseball cards.... Mickey Mantle and Sandy Koufax rookie cards and Babe Ruth cards, among others. They also passed around a bat used by Babe Ruth during the 1933 season. We then stopped by the Comic book/movie memorabilia area, where we were shown some of the rarest classic comic books featuring Superman, Batman's first appearance, Spiderman's first, etc., etc.

After that we went to the floor where the coins are handled. We saw the area where they photograph coins for their sales. Next to that was where they package and ship coins to successful bidders. Then we saw where the catalogers and researchers work. One of the offices we visited was lined with shelves packed with reference books and auction catalogs, ranging from the 19th century up through just a few years old. They pulled out a few of special interest to the Large Cent guys...several of whom had to be "coaxed" to leave to continue the tour.

After the tour ended there was a light lunch served, but I figured that if I ever wanted to be able to buy another coin, I had better skip out and hurry on home and get back to work.

On Thursday evening was the social gathering at the hotel, with plenty of food and refreshments. I snuck out a bit early to begin setting up for the “Colonial Happening,” which was to begin at 8pm. I followed Ray’s format of a video camera setup to project images of coins on a screen so everyone could see them without having to pass them around. I wanted it to be a participatory event instead of me doing all the talking, so I invited the presenters to sit by the camera and present their own items while telling us all about them. A laser pointer was available to point out specific things on the items they wanted to share.

First, Pierre Fricke presented several Fugio coppers with the “cross after date” obverse....part of his larger display down on the bourse. Dennis Wierzba then shared an 8 escudo gold coin and an engraved Fugio fantasy piece. Mike Wierzba showed us a double struck 1788 head-left New Jersey....with both dates visible. Next he showed a book from the 1880s on the financial history of Rhode Island. The really neat part was that interleaved into the book, so as to show both the front and back of the note, was an actual piece of RI paper money. Next, Greg Field showed an engraved token from the 18th century.... from the Carolinas, if I recall.

After everyone else was done, I showed two examples of what I believe to be an unusual, if not rare, die state of the otherwise common 1787 Miller 15-F variety....the CONNECT obverse. There is a heavy die break from the rim up onto the shoulder of the obverse figure, with one coin being a slightly later state than the other. I have only ever seen two examples of this break....both of which I own (*so either I’ve been very lucky, or no one else cares*). If there was any uncertainty as to the emission sequence for the three varieties that use this obverse die, this at least helps identify which emission was struck last.

We finished out the evening viewing some rarer Vermont varieties. Among the coins viewed were examples of Ryder- 1, 15, 18, two examples of Ryder-28, **three** examples of Ryder-30, Ryder-35 (ex. Partrick Collection), and three examples of Ryder-39.

I only got to take a head count once during the evening and at that time there were 17 of us in the room (*see picture*). I know people popped in and out throughout the evening, so there may have been more or less at given points throughout the evening. When we finally ended a bit after 10pm, to our surprise we found that all three of the other “Happenings” had already ended. Colonials are obviously more interesting!!

On Friday, the bourse opened to the public. I got there shortly after it opened so I only had a bit less than an hour for a first pass around the room. I cannot even **begin** to describe how refreshing it was to walk past table after table, case after case, and see almost nothing but little round brown discs!!! Almost any individual case held more early copper than you will see on an entire bourse floor at most coin shows, unless one of the specialist copper dealers is in attendance.

At 11am we retreated to the adjoining room for the C4 regional meeting. Among the C4 members in attendance were Bill Eckberg, Mike Packard, Gene Anderson, Dennis Wierzba, Mike Wierzba, Bill Mitchell, Mike Demling, Will Nipper, Gregory Field, and yours truly. In addition, non-members Hal Cherry, Bob Fagaly, and Rual Perkins were in attendance. By the end of the meeting, both Bob and Rual had joined C4.

Discussion began with some general C4 business announcements. Mike W. gave an overview of the upcoming rollout of the new C4 website and some of the features it will contain. Announcements of several upcoming books were discussed. Among them were; Syd Martin's book on the French Colonies coinage, Chris McDowell's work on Abel Buell, and Lou Jordan's upcoming work on Lord Baltimore coinage. It was also noted that Mike Demling is close to completing his attribution guide for Massachusetts coppers; it will follow the format of his New Jersey attribution guide, and will complement the other MA copper book when it is published. We then spent the remainder of the hour talking about both C4 and EAC in general, the *Newsletter*, and the upcoming C4 Convention.

Friday afternoon there were at least two Education Forums related to Colonials. First was Pierre Fricke's talk on collecting Fugios, and then John Kraljevich spoke on the 1795 time capsule recently "unearthed" at the Massachusetts State House in Boston. Both talks were excellent! After the talks had finished, I made one last round of the floor and purchased a copy of the new "Grading Guide for Early American Copper Coins." I was able to get three of the four authors to sign my book before I left. I'll get the last signature at C4 in November.

All in all it was a great time! This Spring-time "copper fix" should hold me over until C4 in November.



Attendees at the Colonial Happening -- Dennis Wierzba at the camera sharing some items.

300th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ILL-FATED 1715 FLEET (A.K.A. THE PLATE FLEET)

(Buell Ish)

2015 marks the 300th anniversary of a great tragedy that occurred along the Eastern shore of what is today the state of Florida. The 1715 Spanish treasure fleet, laden with gold, silver, and other spoils of the new world, as well as goods from China that had already crossed one ocean, was on its way back to Spain. During the night of July 30-31, the combined fleet was caught between a ferocious hurricane and the Florida coast. The entire Spanish fleet of eleven ships was lost. Only one ship in the group, the French warship *Grifón*, managed to ride out the storm and make it to Europe.

Of the estimated 2,000 individuals on board those ships, about half lost their lives during that night. Many more would die in the days to come. Financially, approximately 14 million Spanish dollars in value (plus contraband) went to the bottom. While many Spanish ships were lost during the centuries after Columbus, the 1715 fleet disaster is the best known, and for good reason. It was disaster on a grand scale...in monetary terms as well as in terms of casualties. As it surpasses other fleet disasters, it has become the poster child of an era full of many calamities at sea.

Many events converged to bring about catastrophe on this scale. The War of Spanish Succession embroiled the European nations for a dozen years, ending with a peace treaty signed at Utrecht in 1713. The annual treasure fleets were greatly disrupted during the war, and Spain's need for money became severe. In a typical year two fleets would sail from Spain for the new world, the *Nueva España* and the *Tierra Firme* fleets. The fleets would then rendezvous in Havana for the return voyage. These two fleets had both left Spain years earlier, September 16, 1712 and July 9, 1713, respectively. Due to many delays, they did not manage to depart Havana for the return voyage until July 24, 1715.

The mines continued to produce gold and silver cobs during these years, meaning that the length of time between fleets resulted in tremendous cargos of gold and silver. The delays also meant that the combined fleet departed past the ideal time of year and, as luck would have it, were caught by an early and especially deadly hurricane.

The wreck sites occurred along an approximately forty mile long stretch of coast South of Cape Canaveral, some in deep water, others in shallow water near the shore. The number of survivors per ship varied, with at least two ships having no survivors. Those who made it to shore were in small groups separated by many miles of inhospitable beach. They faced grave circumstances and many died as the hours and days ticked by. Amid the wreckage and body strewn beaches, a few sea worthy launches were found and expeditions to St. Augustine and Havana were launched. Some of the survivors made the approximately 150 mile trek to St. Augustine on foot with their pockets filled with silver and gold. These unfortunate individuals were termed deserters, their stories recorded, and they were summarily executed.

These records, as well as all the other records kept, both by the Spanish authorities as well as by many individuals, have all been reassembled by historians into a very detailed account of all aspects of the 1715 fleet disaster. These records also include the Spanish attempts to recover treasure in the 1716 to 1718 time frame, including pirate efforts to capture recovered loot. After this period of time, the ships rested in the ocean for about 250 years.

Modern recovery efforts began in the early 1960s. That story is also quite interesting and can be found in the *Pieces of Eight* book as well as in the January, 1965 *National Geographic* listed in the Resources at the conclusion of this article. For those wishing to learn more, the web site of the 1715 Fleet Society is an especially good place to start as they have arranged a variety of events, most of them occurring at the end of July, to mark the passing of this somber anniversary. Additionally, an impressive exhibit of 1715 Fleet treasure took place this past January at the F.U.N. convention.

New World Spanish coins were very much a part of the North American colonies, as were coins of European origin. These “foreign” coins were the basis for monetary transactions in the colonies, and as such are central to many of our collections. Many coin collectors shy away from “salvage” coins due to varying degrees of corrosion. And yet there are other collectors who are drawn to such coins for a variety of reasons. Many such collectors even collect by shipwreck. In these cases, the coins generally come with certificates indicating the particular recovery site.



Typical 8 *Reales* cob recovered from the 1715 Fleet.
The unusual shape tends to be the norm for cobs of this era. Photo by author.

A great deal has been learned about the history of the times as well as these coinages in particular via the archeology associated with treasure recovery. Moreover, the publicity associated with the 1715 Fleet recovery operations brought the attention of a large segment of the population to the otherwise quiet area of numismatics. The coins recovered from the 1715 fleet fall into the cob category, a crude style of coin designed around the Spanish crown's need to account for the quantity of gold and silver being transported. As such, a majority of the metal from these cobs were recycled into other coinages, reducing the number of non-salvage cobs available to collectors. Certain coinages would be

prohibitively rare were it not for salvage material, which is still being brought up daily. For those interested in the “sunken treasure” aspect, I would heartily recommend the *PLVS VLTRA Newsletter*. It is published quarterly. (\$15 to *PLVS VLTRA Newsletter*, P.O. Box 1698, W. Palm Beach, FL 33402-1698)

Resources:

1715 Fleet Society website at <http://www.1715fleetsociety.com>.

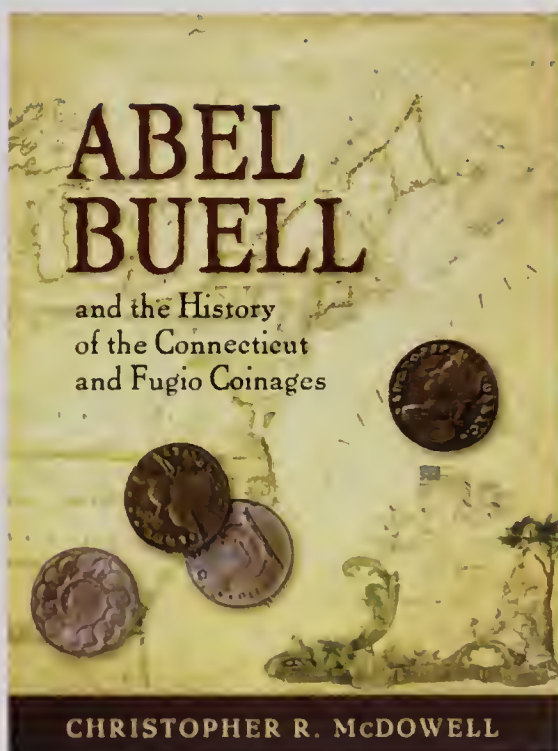
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Sedwick, Daniel and Frank, *The Practical Book of Cobs*, fourth edition, Winter Park, FL, Daniel Frenk Sedwick, 2007.

Wagner, Kip, *Pieces of Eight, Recovering the Riches of a Lost Spanish Treasure Fleet*, New York, Dutton, 1966.

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Walton, Timothy R., *The Spanish Treasure Fleets*, Sarasota, FL, Pineapple Press 2002.



NOTICE: The newest book published by C4 has just been released. It is: *Abel Buell and the History of the Connecticut and Fugio Coinages* by Chistopher R. McDowell. It can be ordered from Charles Davis, or by visiting the web page noted below:

If you are interested, the Table of Contents has been published on our website: www.colonialcoins.org.

http://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/charles_davis/44/product/mcdowell_abel_buell_and_the_history_of_the_connecticut_and_fugio_coppers/599393/Default.aspx

Photographing Your Colonial Coins A D.I.Y. Guide: PART TWO, EDITING YOUR PHOTOS TO GET THE BEST IMAGE

(Jeff Rock)

In the first half of this article, printed in the last edition of the *Newsletter*, we looked at the equipment you would need as well as how to find the right place (and time) to shoot your coin photographs. Now we move on to what you do AFTER the photographs have been taken. Again, this is not the ONLY way to handle this task – this is an easy, convenient, virtually free way that works very well for this writer.

SECTION THREE: PHOTO EDITING

OK, take a deep breath and relax. The hard part is over. Really. You found the sweet spot for your photographs, you have all the equipment you are going to need, and now you just need to put in the time to shoot your coins and then digitally manipulate those raw images to give you the best possible result, a process that will allow you to do neat things like put both the obverse and reverse on the same photo, add descriptive text like a variety or inventory number to the photo itself and fix any little problems that will invariably turn up.

To start out, take photographs of a handful of coins – it would be helpful to have pieces of different color and different surface quality to play with in the editing stage, as these different types of coins may need different types of editing (light brown, dark brown, smooth, lightly rough and very rough surfaces, for instance), and it will be good practice to get a feel for what your editing software can and cannot do. Make sure the coins you shoot are clean, with nothing on their surfaces – a stray piece of lint or a hair will be greatly enlarged on the finished photograph, so lightly brush your coin to remove anything like that (and, of course, if your coin has any surface contamination like PVC, you should remove that before photography). Once you have 20 or 30 photos taken (it's easiest to do obverse and then reverse for each coin, and keep them in the order you shoot them), load them onto your computer – I have a folder titled “WORKING PHOTOS” that I load these initial images into, and it is easy to keep track of them there. In their own folder they don't get confused with final images, and I can easily delete these originals when I am finished editing them. It doesn't matter what file type your camera uses; JPEG is the easiest to work with (and has become pretty much the default for digital cameras), but other formats like GIF work fine too.

There is a small learning curve here but once mastered, photo editing is quite easy. For our purposes we only need a few basic tools, so photo editing programs that offer a near infinite number of bells and whistles will probably be more confusing to a novice and less useful than one that has the exact basic tools you need. Unfortunately there are

numerous photo editing programs available, ranging from expensive and intricate ones like Adobe PhotoShop, to free ones (one of which usually comes preloaded on your computer) that do minor fixes and basic editing but don't give you the tools you need to produce good coin photos. I can't go into detail on all the different programs – I wouldn't even know how to use many of them! But I can describe a program that has everything you need to produce good finished photographs and, even better, is absolutely free (though if you like the product and its ease of use, the developers are always grateful for a small donation).

What you need are tools to crop, rotate, sharpen, adjust color and brightness, erase, add text, add margins, resize photos and the ability to stitch two or more photographs together into a seamless whole. This is the BASIC tool set you will need, and you will use most of those tools on every single photo you edit. Some software programs will have many more tools – for instance, the Adobe products working with layers and many other complex things that are simply not needed at this stage – you can explore them when you are more advanced, but for our goals here you just need these basics tools.

The program I use and will be describing in this section is called PhotoScape. As mentioned, it is free and can be downloaded at www.photoscape.org. The website carries links to several other products, and is somewhat confusingly laid out, so make sure you navigate it correctly and download ONLY PhotoScape (and don't add in all the toolbars, new search engines and other junk that the download option will suggest – uncheck all those boxes when you start the download and just get what you need). Note that the program you download will be an older, basic version – it has been updated many times since, and once you have downloaded and opened the program it will start checking for updates (as of this writing they are on version 3.7) – install them, life is easier that way and you will have the most up-to-date product with all the fixes that have been made to previous versions. Once installed and updated, you're ready to begin, so let's walk through the steps you will probably need to get your photos looking their best.

The start screen in PhotoScape has a dozen or so different modes – relax, you only need two of them, the Editor Mode and the Combine Mode (a third, the Batch Editor Mode is useful when you are adjusting a large number of photographs in exactly the same way). On the start screen, click "EDITOR," which will take you to the mode you will be using the most; at the upper left corner there will be a list of folders and files on your desktop – click on the one that you stored your raw images in and open that folder. The photos will be listed in order, so click on the first one, which will bring that image up on to the large working area. Before we start the actual editing, take a look at the lower right portion of this screen – there is a button there labeled "UNDO." This button will be your best friend. Clicking this will undo the last change you made to the photo, clicking again will undo the change right before that, and so on all the way back to the original photograph. Until you actually "SAVE" the photograph that you are working on, you can undo ANYTHING that you've done to it – so don't worry about making mistakes or ruining the picture by trying something out. Feel free to play around with the different tools and see what they do, especially the ones not discussed here – you can always undo anything you did, and you will have a better understanding of what options are available to you.

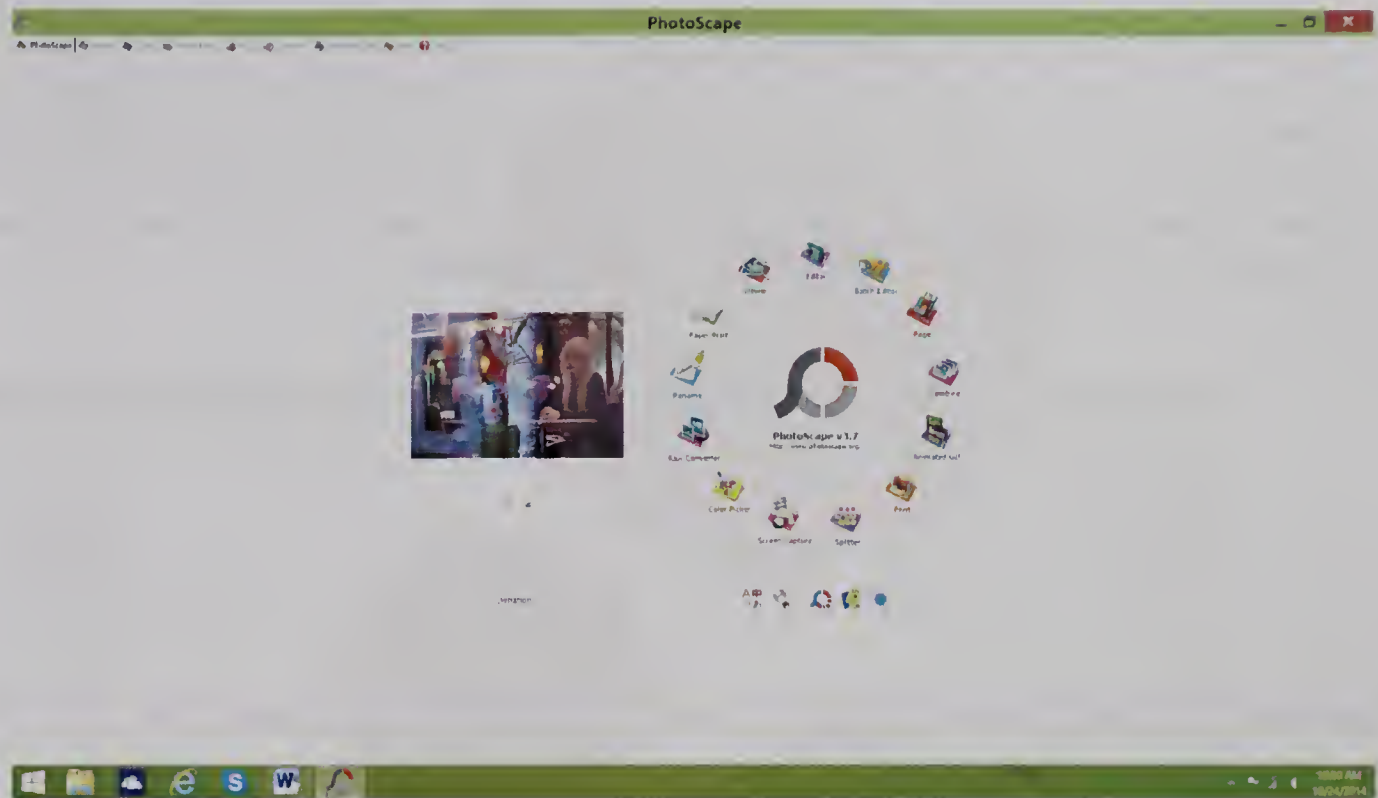


Figure One: The main page of the installed PhotoScape software. The Editor button is located at the top of the circle of icons at the right.

OK, your first photo is loaded. Take a close look – it probably looks good to your eyes, but it can be better. Depending on the light source you use, there is probably a shadow somewhere, usually extending from the bottom rim of the coin downwards in the photo if you used natural lighting, or opposite where the light source was if you used artificial. Your first step actually kills two birds with one stone – you are going to get rid of that shadow AND all the other extraneous areas on your photograph – you will get down to working with ONLY the image of the coin itself, which is all you really want anyway.

In my example below, you can see how small the area is that includes just the coin – the rest is wasted white space that we simply do not need. What I really like most about PhotoScape is that it allows you to choose an option that will crop a round image – and since most of our coins are round, this is exactly the tool we need! From the editor main page, find and click the tab that says “CROP,” and you will see a little box that says “Crop Round Image” – click it. Using your mouse, drag the round cropping tool to the edges of the coin – this takes a little practice to get used to, but it does get easier with practice. Remember, you have the Undo button available if something goes wrong, so nothing will be ruined here. The crop circle will show the area you are saving in a brighter hue than the area you are cropping off. Around the circle are four tiny squares – click and drag on these to adjust the circle so that it is tight against the edge of the coin. In a perfect world the coin would be completely round and the crop circle will fit like a glove. In reality, colonials are often a bit out-of-round (sometimes dramatically so), and the round crop may not do the job completely. In that situation I like to use it to make sure that the shadow area is what is cropped out completely, and if you need to leave white space around the rest of the coin, that’s fine. If you can’t get all the shadow off, or if there are other marks visible on the white background that is saved in the cropped photo, you will want to erase those by hand

go to the “TOOLS” tab and click on “Paint Brush.” Select white from the color choices given, and select the size of the brush you want to use (the largest one is fairly easy to use), and then VERY CAREFULLY drag the eraser tool across the areas of the image you want to erase – again, the Undo button is there if you erase too much (and I guarantee you will, this takes a steady hand and lots of practice, but you will get it eventually). When all that is done you should be left with one circular image of one side of your coin that takes up all or nearly all of the working area of the PhotoScape screen.



Figure Two: The raw image loaded into PhotoScape. Note all the extra space around the photo, and the data not needed, such as the tripod leg at the left of the photo.

Regardless of what kind of light source you used, natural or artificial, the color will almost certainly be a little off when you compare it to the actual coin. The camera reads the entire area that is being photographed and is programmed to adjust the white balance on the photo so that everything comes out fairly even – but you are shooting a small piece of copper on a very large field of white, which will throw that programming off, and the camera will adjust the end product so that the white fields look more gray, and the copper usually gets brightened up in the process. PhotoScape has an easy fix for that. On the “HOME” tab, find the button that says “Auto Level” and click it once – like



Figure Three: the same photograph, with the round Crop tool applied – all the extraneous detail is now gone, and the image of the coin itself is what fills the working field. The coin looks a little washed out, and the color is off from what it looks like in person....more to come!



Figure Four: The same photograph with the color adjusted using only the “Auto Level” button. This color is what the coin looks like in hand, and no further adjustments are needed.

magic the color should change to something more approaching the actual color of the coin (now that all that extraneous white background is gone, the washed out or brighter color of the copper is changed back to what it was supposed to look like). If the color is still not

quite where it should be, click on the little downward arrow next to the button that says “Bright, Color.” There you will see options to brighten or darken the photo, with Low, Medium and High settings – play with these and find what works (again, the “Undo” button will erase anything that doesn’t look good). There are many other filters under this button that you can play around with if you like, but the only ones you will usually need are Brighten and Darken. Again, feel free to play with the others and see what they do – they might not be useful for coin photos, but could come in handy with other photos you take.

If you are a fan of black and white photos – and those images tend to show detail better than color and are far more useful for attribution guides than color pictures generally are – then at the top of the column with the “Bright, Color” setting are five small squares, the middle of which is called “Grayscale” – click that once, and the photo will convert (though you may have to change the brightness or darkness a little to get it looking right – and you already know where those options are, since you just used them). For coin images, using Grayscale almost always give you a better image than using the Black & White square right next to it – grayscale just strips the hue from the image, leaving everything else the same, while the B&W option tends to increase the contrast to an unnatural level for something this large. If you want both color and black and white copies of the same picture, just wait until you are finished with everything else discussed in this section and after you save the color image, just hit the Grayscale button and save the resulting product under a different name (I simply add BW to the end of the name I used for the color image, and that way they get sorted next to each other in whatever folder I save them to on my computer).



Figure Five: The same photograph with the hue stripped out using the “Grayscale” button. Black and white photos are useful for showing detail, as well as for printing in venues where color photographs would be too costly to use.

You’re in the home stretch! The photo is looking pretty good, but almost every photo can do with a bit more sharpening – and all you do is hit the “Sharpen” button on the

“Home” tab of Editor mode to do it. This won’t make a worn coin look uncirculated, but it will make the detail in the photo look crisper, matching that of the coin itself. The only time this button doesn’t work well is with very rough coins – you end up sharpening the roughness and the coin will often look worse. Again, play around with it and see what looks good to you.

Only two minor things left to do, and the photo will be done. You will probably want to resize it – it helps to keep all your images of coins of roughly the same diameter at the same pixel size. If you are just storing them on your computer to view, then 1000 pixels is more than adequate, and will allow you to enlarge the photos quite a bit without things getting blurry. If you are selling items on ebay, they require photos to be 1600 pixels, so you will want to save your images at that size. PhotoScape has both options – just click the downward arrow next to the “Resize” button on the “Home” tab of the Editor page and select the size you want from the menu. If a size is not available on that menu, then just click the “Adjust the Longer Length” option, and type in the size that you want – despite the options given, you have a lot more pixels in the photograph you are working on, so even if you want to store it at 2000 or 3000 pixels you have enough in the original photo to do so. That won’t make any difference on your computer monitor, or if you want to print the photos at actual size – but if you want to blow a photo up to poster size, then the extra pixels could be useful. But remember, the more pixels you choose, the more space it takes to store on your hard drive. It’s the same broken record from me though – play around with the sizes and see what works for you. And once you have something that works, stay consistent with that size!

If you are planning to stitch the two sides together and/or to add text of some sort to the photo the next step you need to do is adjust the margins. On the “Home” tab there is a button that says “Margin” – click that. Make sure that you select white as the color option at the top, since that is what the rest of your background is. Then type in the margins that you want for the four sides of the photo – this is completely up to you, with whatever margin you think looks good. I use a value of 10 for the top, left and right sides and a value of 200 for the bottom – this gives a little white space around those first three edges, and a much larger one below the coin which is where I will add whatever sort of text I want when I stitch the photos together. Aesthetically I don’t like the two stitched halves of the photo touching each other, so a little more white space will be in the middle (since you have the right margin of one picture and the left margin of the other). If this doesn’t look right to you, play around with your options and find whatever value pleases your own eyes – you are the only person that has to be happy with the finished photograph! And, again, that “Undo” button will help you out. PhotoScape will assume you want the same margin for every photo after that, until you change any of the fields to new values. If you do, you will lose the old margin values, so write down whatever you liked somewhere, and keep it handy!



Figure Six: The same color photograph from Figure Four, with the Sharpen button used, the photo reduced to 1000 pixels, and margins added on all four sides, the larger margin at the bottom to be filled with text (with the margins the final size is slightly larger than 1000 pixels).

Finally, the moment you've waited for. This photo is DONE. Click the "Save" button at the lower right corner of the "Home" tab. A box will pop up giving you options to "Save," "Save in Designated Folder" or "Save As." Under that are several other options for the photo being saved. Slide the "JPEG Quality" button all the way to the right, to 100%. The other boxes can be unchecked, with the exception of the one that says "Maintain the Exif Information." Now you can click the "Save" button, which will save this photo with whatever the file name originally was – for a Sony camera that might be DSC0231. That is fine, but it isn't a very useful file name, and it will be difficult to search for a specific coin if all your images are file names like that! I recommend clicking on the "Save As" button instead, which allows you to save the photograph with a new name that will be more useful to you. The box that opens up allows you to choose where you want to save the image (it default picks the folder that the original image was from, but you can save it anywhere you want, perhaps making a new folder called "Finished Photos" to keep track of them in one place). Choose a file name that will make sense to you. If you keep an inventory spreadsheet, then the file name can be the same as the inventory number, which will easily allow you to match photos to your spreadsheet. If you want to be able to find photos of certain varieties, then save the file with the name of the variety – for instance, "Miller 18-g.1" is a good file name (you probably know it's a Connecticut copper and a 1787, so you can leave off that part if you want, or you can title it "1787 Miller 18-g.1" which will allow you to sort the files and have all the 1785's in order before the 1786's, which are before the 1787's, etc.). Think about what makes sense to you – and remember you can always change the file name at any time without changing any of the data inside the file itself. You can also add more data to the file name itself, such as a pedigree – in the case here it could be "1787 Miller 18-g.1 [ex Steve Tannenbaum Collection]."

Go through and repeat these steps with each of the photos you took – some may need to be tweaked a little differently than others, but generally you will find that a batch

of photos taken at the same time, in the same location, will usually be edited in the same way for each separate photograph. Get through them all – and marvel at how much easier it becomes after you’ve done 10 or 20 pictures! Save them in the folder you designate, and go through and look at them with whatever picture viewing software your computer comes with. They should look pretty darned good – and if something doesn’t look right, then make a note of it, go back into your PhotoScape program and check the various buttons to see if there is something there that can fix the problem. There’s also a “Help” button located at the very top of the main PhotoScape page which will take you to a website that is something like a User’s Manual and which touches on a lot of things we won’t be discussing here – read it and see if it helps!

You should now have a folder filled with images of one side of a coin, which is adequate for many people. But if you want to see both sides of a coin on a single image, you need to stitch them together – a very easy process in PhotoScape that we will cover next.

SECTION FOUR: STITCHING AND ADDING TEXT

From the main start page hit the “COMBINE” icon or from the top toolbar of any other page, hit the “COMBINE” button. If the folder you are storing your FINISHED photos in is not the one that opens at the left side of the screen, scroll through the list of folders on your desktop and double click to open it. The files will be listed in the field below, in alphabetical order. If you’ve saved the photos with the same name as the raw images, that is fine, they will still be in order.

Click the photo that will be the lefthand side of the picture – usually the obverse – and drag it with your mouse to the large working field. Then do the same for the photo on the right side, usually the reverse. At the far right side of the working field is a group of buttons and options. Click “Side” (or “Checker” if you are putting more than two coin sides on one photograph). Three rows below where you select that is a drop down menu – select “Maintain the Original size” from that menu. Since you’ve saved both photos at the same pixel size, this will ensure that both halves of the photo are equal. The other options in those tools are not needed for this type of combining, so just leave them as they are.



Figure Seven: Both halves of the coin on a single photograph, using the Combine Mode. Once the two halves are on the same working area, hitting the “Edit” button will allow you to add text to the photograph.

If you saved these photos with the margins mentioned earlier you should find that they are close, but do not touch each other, and that there is ample room below the photo to add text. To do that click the “Edit” button at the top right corner, which will take you back to the main editing home page that you used for making the single photos – and you can now see the whole picture with the two sides fully visible. At the lower left of the working field click the “Object” button and in the left column click the button that has a capital “T” on it. This opens up the Text window – type in whatever text you want on the photograph in the box provided. You can adjust the font, size and color of the text with the appropriate buttons and drop-down menus while this window is open. I personally like Times New Roman, and a larger font size since the photograph is fairly large, so 60 or thereabouts is a good, readable size – but experiment and see what YOU like. Black is also usually more readable than colored text – and easier to print. Double check and make sure you have everything in the text box correct, and then click OK. The text you chose will be dropped to the exact middle of the picture, which is obviously not where you want it. Simply click in the middle of the text box, and using your mouse, drag it down to where you want to place it in the white space below the coin – to help guide you there is always a little square at the exact center of the text box, so you can use that to line it up evenly with the white space between the two halves of the coin. If you want to change anything, see a typo, don’t like your font or size or color choices, just double click within the text box again, and that will reopen the Text window and you can make changes to the existing text – but note, if you hit the “T” button again it will open up another text window and any text you type in that window will be inserted on the photograph in addition to your previous text.



1787 Connecticut Copper, Miller 18-g.1
Ex Steve Tannenbaum Collection

Figure Eight: The final product. Both sides are visible on a single photograph, and text added for the variety and any other pertinent data that you want to have stay with the image.

Take a good look at your masterpiece – at this point you should be happy with what you see! You have both sides of the coin on a single image, with the text you want. If you're done, the only thing left to do is to save it. From the screen you are now on, hit the "Save" button. This time you don't have any option except "Save As" since you created a whole new image. Click that button, and save the image with whatever file name you like – though, as stated earlier, the variety is usually the best name as it will make it easy to search for and locate quickly. If you have more than one example of the same variety and try to save the photo with the exact same name, PhotoScape will ask you if you want to replace your previous photo. You probably don't, so any further examples can be saved with a slightly different name. Using the earlier example your full photo might be called "Miller 18-g.1." Your next example of the variety could be "Miller 18-g.1 Number 2" or "Miller 18-g.1 [2]" or however else appeals to you and makes sense to you. Save the photo in a location you can find – again the "Finished Photos" folder, or if you have several different areas of collecting, you can make a "Connecticut Coppers" folder, and inside that folder have separate folders for each of the four years – in this instance you would just save this specific photo to your "1787" folder. The benefit of storing this way is that all the pictures will be in folders by year, and when you sort them by name, they will be in variety order. But find a way that works for you and lets you quickly locate whatever pictures you need.

When you are done with your first combined pic and want to go on to the next one, just head back to the "Combine" tab, and click the little trashcan icon – this will clear the photos currently in the field (note that this does not delete them from your computer), and then you just drag the next two photos and repeat the steps above.

Usually I save only the finished combined photographs – I don't have any real need for the original raw picture or the single-side finished images, and why waste storage space, so those get deleted. If you use any other platforms – the Cloud, a laptop, a notebook, a smart phone, a tablet, a backup drive or even a USB flash drive, it is easy to copy your folder of finished photos to other locations; this is useful both for the security of having the images elsewhere in case your computer crashes or a device gets lost or damaged. But it also means you can take those images with you in places where you wouldn't be lugging your desktop computer around!

Those are the basic steps you will need to produce good quality digital photographs of the coins in your collection. Like anything else in life, the more you practice the better you will get. It is completely typical to take a few hundred photos and think they look good – then experiment a bit and find your new photos look a heck of a lot better, and now you need to go back and re-shoot those coins you did earlier! There's nothing wrong with that – and you get the fun of looking at those coins again while you do the pictures over! I have sometimes reshot the same coin a half dozen times to get an image that I am happy with...and all it takes is just a little bit of time.

Hopefully you will be inspired to try your hand at photographing your collection – it really isn't that difficult to do, and you will have the luxury of viewing your images whenever and wherever you want, something that has never before been available to numismatists!

And here you thought the "I (heart) whatever" was a modern usage! Check out the 1775 counterfeit English halfpenny. Wonder who "T" and "SLY" were ☺



After receiving his Kendall Catalog in the mail on 11 March 11 2015, C4 member Will Nipper posted to a colonial chat group:

"Whoever said money couldn't buy happiness obviously didn't collect colonials."

**C4/EAC REGIONAL MEETING
GARDEN STATE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
CONVENTION
SOMERSET, NJ – MAY 16, 2015**

(Ray Williams)

Our annual joint meeting of C4 and EAC members was held at the GSNA Convention again this year. There were about 15 members present. Greg Heim chaired the meeting on behalf of EAC and Ray Williams chaired on behalf of C4. The meeting opened at 1 PM with self introductions.

EAC President, Bill Eckberg, sent notes from EAC Convention in Dallas to share with all: The EAC website is being upgraded over the next few months. The Gavin Fund will pay for the DVD project and photographing the Carnegie Institute collection of early coppers. A medal will be commissioned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of EAC, and there will be a competition for its design. Four prominent (and local) EAC members/officers offered to chair the 2018 EAC Convention in West Palm Beach, FL. EAC Membership stands at 1147 - about the same as last year. The treasury is sound. Mark Borckardt is working on the EAC club history and hoping to have it completed for the 50th anniversary. EAC 2016 will be held April 6-10, in Charlotte, NC, at the Marriott City Center (John Kraljevich, Convention Chairman). The EAC 2017 will be held April 19-23 in Philadelphia at the Doubletree Center City (Ray Williams, Convention Chairman).

C4 President Jim Rosen also sent some info to share: The 2015 C4 Convention will be again held in conjunction with the Whitman EXPO, November 5-8, 2015, in Baltimore, MD. There will be a grading outreach program at the convention's C4 table where opinions on the grades of CT, VT, NJ and Fugio coppers will be given. This will be an educational outreach showing what to look for with respect to wear and such when grading. At the 2016 C4 Convention, C4 and EAC are planning a joint educational program, similar to the very successful joint COAC held with the ANS this past November. C4 is publishing another book, authored by Chris McDowell on Abel Buell. It should be available at the C4 Convention, and possibly before. The C4 website is still in a construction phase and will show significant improvements when officially opened. In the mean time, www.colonialcoins.org is kept up to date with club news, meetings, C4N indexes and lending library contents. Check it often for updates.

The meeting was then opened for general discussion, questions and answers. Article submissions were encouraged for both club publications. No one present had attended the EAC convention in Dallas, so we had no first hand convention reports. Some new acquisitions were shared and several coins passed around the room. A request to have educational events (for C4, but applies to EAC also) to be recorded and posted on our club website or Youtube was made. Also, live streaming of educational events would be nice for those that could not attend. The technology exists to do so.

Ray Williams talked for a few minutes about the importance of EAC to C4 members and of C4 to EAC members. Then asking how many C4 members would like an EAC Application, four were handed out. Then asking EAC members how many would like a C4 Application, no hands were raised!!! But after close of the meeting, two came to the table and asked for applications. A fun time was had.

FRANKLIN'S FIRST USE OF A NATURE PRINT ON MONEY: WHEN AND WHERE?

(David D. Gladfelter)

Shown herein is the 1739 "Pensilvania" 20 shilling bill of credit from the collection of Eric P. Newman, sold by Heritage in Part VI of his collection (to me – wow on top of wow!). Like Benjamin Franklin himself, the bill has become "food for worms," but historically it is a first: Franklin's initial use of nature printing as a device to foil the busy, nefarious but ever-ingenious counterfeiters. Or is it?



Eric thought so when he published his seminal and well-illustrated study of the technology of nature printing in 1964.¹ In that study he stated that "(t)he first leaf cuts were introduced on the reverses of all denominations of Pennsylvania currency dated August 10, 1739 ... These blackberry and willow leaf prints were identical on each denomination."² He also stated that the first leaf cuts (of a sage leaf) appeared on New Jersey currency in the July 2, 1746 issue, also printed by Franklin, and were continued by other currency printers on most subsequent New Jersey issues.³ In the first edition of his colonial currency treatise, he continued to credit Franklin with initiating nature printing "as a major deterrent to counterfeiters" in the Pennsylvania issue of 1739.⁴

However, by 1976 Eric had changed his thinking, now crediting Franklin with having introduced his secret anticounterfeiting device two years earlier, in the New Jersey issue of March 25, 1737.⁵

No examples of this issue are known today; all are presumed to have been destroyed.⁶ So how do we know that they had nature printed backs? By asking Franklin himself! In the Pennsylvania Gazette of November 15, 1744, Franklin published this notice:⁷

A Caution to the PUBLICK.

*Last Saturday several counterfeit **One Shilling Bills** of NEW-Jersey were uttered here. The Paper is pretty stiff and good, and some of the Bills have an impression of a **Sage Leaf**, ill done, upon their Backs. If these Bills are compared with the **True Ones**, both being fair, many Variations may be observed both in the **Signing** and the **Printing**, as the Counterfeits are a very bad Imitation of the **True**. Those who have not both Sorts to look at together, may take notice, that the Figures that make the Ornament or Border at the Bottom of the **False Bills**, which have a Resemblance of a **Flower de Luce** at Top, and something more under, stand apart, which in the **True Bills** stand close; and that in the **False Bills** the first I in the Word **Shilling**, that ends the Bill, is shorter than the last I in that Word; that the second L in the same Word is shorter than the first, and that the G is longer than the other Capitals, and made very open.*

The one shilling bills referred to must be the March 25, 1737 bills, since no later-dated New Jersey bills had been issued as of November 15, 1744. So Franklin's new device was immediately put to the test, and passed. It remained in use for 49 more years and withstood several more counterfeiting attempts.⁸

In Eric's treatise he states, in agreement with Franklin, that the one-shilling denomination of the NJ 1737 issue was counterfeited.⁹ None of these counterfeits are known either, but if one does turn up, we will know from Franklin himself how to identify it. And it will have a (phony) sage leaf on its back.

ENDNOTES

¹ "Nature Printing on Colonial and Continental Currency," *The Numismatist*, vol. 77 ## 2, 3, 4 & 5, pp. 147-154, 299-305, 457-465, 613-623 (February- May 1964), reformatted and reprinted by the ANA in 1964, reproduced in full in the Heritage Part VI catalog.

² *ibid*, p. 613.

³ *ibid*, p. 620.

⁴ *The Early Paper Money of America* (Racine, WI, Whitman Publishing Co., 1967), p. 238.

⁵ *The Early Paper Money of America*, second (Bicentennial) edition (Iola, WI, Krause Publications, Inc., 1976), p. 203; third edition (Krause, 1990), p. 224; fourth edition (Krause, 1997) p. 246; fifth and current edition (Krause, 2008) p. 250.

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Leonard W. Labaree, ed., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 2 (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1960), p. 454.

⁸ Sage leaf backs appeared on all subsequent New Jersey issues through and including the final one authorized by the act of May 17, 1786, but for two. When Isaac Collins succeeded to the position of King's Printer in the colony of New Jersey following the death of James Parker in 1770, he did not immediately obtain the sage leaf cuts that Parker had gotten from Franklin, so he made engraved leaf cuts that were used only on the February 20, 1776 issue, Collins's first. The guaranteed bills authorized by the act of June 9, 1780 were printed by Hall and Sellers of Philadelphia and used different anticounterfeiting devices on their backs. Additional counterfeits of New Jersey bills using the sage leaf design appeared on issues dated 1756, 1760, 1761, 1762, 1763 and 1764.

⁹ See fn. 5.

CLIPPING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NE SHILLINGS – DID IT REALLY OCCUR?

(Jim Rosen)

At our recent C4 convention, I heard a wonderful presentation on minting techniques of Massachusetts Silver by Christopher Salmon at the co-sponsored C4/ANS COAC (Coinage of the Americas Conference). This discussion moved me to think about the NE shillings and the topic of clipping of these coins. The need for “good coinage” in Massachusetts in the mid-17th century was due in part to the overwhelming presence of poor quality coinage in circulation such as clipped coins, debased, and counterfeits coins, be they normal or light weight, and the scarcity of good specie to carry on commerce. The time was ripe for the production of coins of good quality and thus Massachusetts’ silver was born. The initial design of these new Massachusetts coins was determined by a legislative document of the House of Magistrates dated May 26/27 1652, as the NE design coins we know today, with NE punched on one side and the denomination (XII) punched on the other.¹ It appears possible that as early as June 20, 1652, John Hull was giving thought to the double ring/tree design, as evidenced by a mint committee document dated June 20, 1652, where there are drawings by Hull on the back of that document of four coins depicting peripheral legends with one sketch showing an inner ring surrounding the roman numerals XII.²

I have heard about clipping of NE shillings for as long as I have been involved with Colonial Coins, which is about 22 years now. The dogma goes something like this: The development of the “new” shilling with inner and outer rings and legend in between (what we now call the Willow Tree shillings) was initiated because the NE shillings were easy targets for clipping and thus the Willow Tree shillings with their outer and inner rings came into being as a deterrent to clipping. If you didn’t see the outer beaded ring, you better have that coin weighed. I believe that the NE shilling planchets were cut out of a strip of silver by shears and thus not completely round and therefore clipping might not be so obvious during the casual transactions of daily trade. In all my years of collecting colonial and pre-federal coins however, I have never seen a clipped NE shilling. Their standard weight is 72 grains. By comparison, their counterparts across the pond (Charles I shillings and Commonwealth shillings of England which were struck at approximately the same time as the NE shillings and with similar fineness) weighed approximately 34% more than the NE shillings, coming in at ~ 96 grains. Or, another way of putting this is that NE shillings were 25% lighter than English shillings of the period. The legislature of Massachusetts deliberately reduced the weight of NE shillings and later Massachusetts Tree shillings as compared to English shillings in order to prevent the flow of this coinage from the colonies to Mother England and beyond; however, this scheme did not work all that well and by 1654 Massachusetts silver was leaving the colony in large quantities, necessitating the appointment of people who would inspect travelers who were going abroad to be sure that they did not have Massachusetts silver in their possession.³

With colonial sales in January 2015 and March 2015 offering a total of 12 NE shillings, these sales, along with Chris Salmon's talk, rekindled my thoughts on this coinage once again and I began to look at NE shillings with an eye toward weights in catalogues like Norweb, Garrett, Ford, Sundman, Hain, Oechsner, Picker, Roper, Eliasberg, and Newman. Jack Howes' exceptional data base of approximately 60 different NE shillings (includes coins from the catalogues above) including weights of 50 of them offered a wonderful insight into these coins. I also obtained weights of the 6 NE shillings from the Kendal Collection, courtesy of Vicken Yegparian of Stacks Bowers and of the 6 NE shillings from the Don Partrick Collection, courtesy of Mark Borckardt of Heritage. To my amazement, *none* of the coins above, which probably number about 62 different pieces (*some pieces however may be overlapping*), had evidence of clipping based on a weight of ~90% or more of standard (72 grains). In fact there were very few that were under 70 grains. There was one coin however in Jack's shilling data base weighing 57.4 grains, but that coin was in the Feversham wreck and under salt water for centuries.

With the assistance of Lou Jordan, Massachusetts legislation specific to this issue was found in Crosby's book (a book every student of pre-federal coinage must have). The date of this legislation was October 19, 1652, and it states that:

*“ . . . ffor the prevention of washing or Clipping of all such peices of mony as shall be Cojned wthin this Jurisdiction. It is Ordered by this Courte and the Authoritje thereof, that henceforth all peices of mony Cojned as afore sajd shall have a double Ring on either side, with this Inscription—Massachusetts, and a tree in the Center on the one side, and New England and the yeere of our lord on the other side, according to this draught here in the margent. ”*⁴

In the margin of this document is a picture of a coin with double rings and a tree in the middle of the coin. The design of the “new tree and ringed coins” was not that much different from shillings of Charles I (similar time period), which had an inner and outer ring, a legend between the rings and the roman numerals XII behind Charles' head. These double ringed coins date back before Edward the Confessor of England and were probably made this way to thwart clipping (personal communication with Richard August). The crudeness of the NE shilling production (being cut with shears and not fully round at all) would certainly make it more difficult to tell that they were light in weight by the average person who did not have a scale. So if this change in design was legislated on October 19, 1652, and NE shillings production commenced sometime in September of 1652, why don't we find any surviving clipped NE shillings, since it appears that the clipped coins stimulated the new design? There has however, been one reported NE shilling (not seen by me) severely clipped (Larry Stack, Will Nipper, personal communication). Perhaps it was used, not to pass as a shilling, but rather as a token, fantasy piece or who knows what. It may also have been made by someone who just had way too much time on his or her hands.

In thinking about the lack of known clipped NE shillings, one can come up with a number of theories as to why we do not see this phenomenon in present day collections. In looking just at the Large Planchet Pine Tree shillings alone, where clipped coins are numerous, there are roughly about 2000 pieces acknowledged based on rarities ratings of

the different die varieties. Realize however, that some rarity ratings have quite large spans of extant numbers, as exemplified by an R-2 coin which has a survival number of between 500-1200 pieces, thus the numbers given above are at best a rough estimate. In the NE shilling series, only about 80 shillings in total of all varieties are known today, based again on rarity ratings and actual observations.⁵ In the Hain 2002 catalogue of Massachusetts Silver auctioned by Stacks and the Newman 2014 catalogue of Colonial Coins auctioned by Heritage, 50 different Large Planchet Pine Tree shillings were catalogued and pictured, all with weights and of these 50 coins, 6 coins were clipped. Converting this survival data to NE shillings, which granted is a giant leap of faith, if ~10% of the surviving Large Planchet Pine Tree shillings in this sample were clipped, and that percentage probably represents a low number, one would possibly expect to roughly have about 6 clipped NE shilling surviving. So where are they? It is conceivable that clipped NE shillings were taken out of circulation and put into the melting pot, for keeping clipped NE shillings in circulation defeated the purpose of producing “new coinage” in the first place (personal discussions with Richard August). Some clipped coins may have been lost to the ground and are just waiting for a metal detectorist. And some, with their scant impressions, may have been spent beyond recognition and lost to history.

One could also hypothesize that no NE shillings were in fact ever clipped and that the October 1652 legislation may have been enacted to preemptively *prevent* clipping by unscrupulous individuals, a practice that was common in England and most likely well known to merchants and legislators of the time. However, I doubt this. Something must have moved the legislators at this time to enact legislation for new coinage. As previously mentioned, in June 1652 Hull had drawn pictures of coins with rings on a mint committee document suggesting that he was thinking about a design that might have prevented clipping, as clipping was well known. So why wait till October to legislate a change if legislators knew about clipping before these NE shillings were ever struck? Maybe by October, clipped NE shillings were prevalent enough in circulation that it was determined that the new Tree/Ring coinage was necessary to reduce this problem and thus new legislation was enacted to change the coinage design which would hopefully reduce this problem. John Hull may have been tinkering with a new design in June of 1652, but legislation was required to support this change. The NE shillings however, served their purpose well. They were easy to strike, punches were easy to produce and because of their simple design, John Hull and Robert Sanderson could get these “good money” shillings into circulation quickly to begin to alleviate the coinage problem. Willow punches, on the other hand, as described by Salmon,⁶ would have definitely taken significantly longer to make due to their intricate detail as compared with the NE shilling punches. Trying to make these new punches first before the NE shilling punches would have probably delayed the entrance of good money into circulation, something that was desperately needed quickly.

So in conclusion, I believe that *there is* solid primary evidence that the governing body of Massachusetts in October of 1652 was in fact very concerned and knowledgeable about clipping of NE coinage, and in particular NE shillings. This real uneasiness, which I believe came to fruition, appears to be the primary motivation for this October 19, 1652.

legislation for the development of the Willow Tree and later Oak and Pine Tree designs despite the fact that no known clipped NE shillings have survived.

I appreciate the discussions with Lou Jordan, Jack Howes, Chris Salmon, Philip Mossman and Richard August regarding this article.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Crosby, Sylvester Sage. *The Early Coins of America; and the Laws Governing their Issue*, 1875. Reprinted by the Quarterman Press, MA 1974.
- ² Jordan, Louis. *John Hull, The Mint And The Economics Of Massachusetts Coinage*, 2002. The Colonial Coin Collectors Club.
- ³ Public Auction Sale, *The Hain Family Collection of Massachusetts Silver Coins*, Stack's January 15th, 2002.
- ⁴ Massachusetts Records, vol. vi. p. 98 from Crosby, p.44, see above.
- ⁵ Salmon, Christopher. *The Silver Coins of Massachusetts*, 2010. ANS/C4 p. 84-95.
- ⁶ Chris Salmon, personal communication November 2014.



REDISCOVERING A PREVIOUSLY KNOWN FACT

(Ray Williams)

I'd like to talk about a couple of personal numismatic discoveries (rediscoveries?) I've made while scanning through Dave Bower's *American Numismatics before the Civil War 1760-1860*, published by Bowers and Merena. There is so much good numismatic material to read out there, I just wish I had the time. But this book is now on my to-read-cover-to-cover list!

For years, I was wondering who the Stephens was that purchased Mickley's Date Under Plowbeam NJ Copper. I have a Charles Davis reprint of the annotated Mickley Sale, and it stated that Stephens purchased the "Date Under Plowbeam" NJ Copper. Stephens was the most active single bidder at the auction. I contacted museums in England, unable to find the coin and unable to find for which museum Stephens was bidding! On page 111 of this book, I finally find that Charles Bushnell was actually Stephens, going under a pseudonym! Karl Moulton communicated with Dave on this topic in 1997! So Bushnell was the owner of the Mickley Date Under Plowbeam. A personal puzzle answered.

Note: This book is available in C4's lending library...

A FEW BITS ABOUT COINS IN EARLY ARKANSAS

(Will Nipper)

In the aftermath of taking my youngest daughter to an animatronic dinosaur exhibit, we stopped by the visitors' center at Arkansas' Davidsonville Historic State Park. While we here weren't part of the thirteen English colonies, we certainly have colonial history, with French settlement dating to 1686. Frenchmen and Spaniards, in particular, settled many places in the region well before the American Revolution. Davidsonville was settled as a planned community slightly later, in 1815, by Americans, who bought land from earlier French settlers. It declined immediately after losing its courthouse and land office to other towns, in 1829, and was bypassed by a new highway to Missouri. In that short time, this Black River town was a gathering place for Americans, Europeans, Native Americans and African Americans. While its tenure isn't part of the classically defined American "colonial" period, many of the coins used by its citizens certainly have colonial relevance.

This brief visit enlightened me with several surprises:

- Eighteen coins and cut pieces of coins were found by archeologists at a single "feature" of the site, which I am told was the town tavern. These were found in 2004 and 2005. A nineteenth coin, the last one in the table below, was found at another feature of the site in 2007. All are silver. Twelve of them are cut pieces. Sixteen of them are Spanish or Spanish colonial.
- Two of the pieces were taken from U. S. capped bust half dollars (1807-1836).
- One of the cut pieces came from a "head" pistareen, which, according to current thinking, is unusual.
- Another wedge-shaped cut piece, not listed in the table below, is believed to be made of lead (or possibly pewter), perhaps from a bale seal. The inescapable conclusion is that it was effectively a counterfeit.
- The site also yielded several wampum-style beads. That is, they are small, cylindrical and made from quahog shells, just as were the beads developed on Long Island in the 1570s and used as currency in Massachusetts and Connecticut in the 17th century. They are white, purple or both in color. Such beads were used in trade long after their use as a formal currency.

Personally, I've always taken a broad view of what it means to be "colonial." Considering sites such as Davidsonville, Arkansas Post, Natchitoches (LA), St. Genevieve (MO), Kaskaskia (IL) and a host of others, I hope you will agree.

Table: Coins and Cut Pieces Found at Davidsonville, Arkansas

Date	Coin	Portrait	Mint	Weight
1789	2R ^{1,2}	Charles IV	Mexico City	6.2 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{8}$ of 8R ^{1,3}	Charles IV	?	2.6 g
1776	"Head" Pistareen ¹	Charles III	?	5.4 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1R ^{1,4}	?	Mexico City	1.8 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ of 8R ¹	Charles IV	?	12.5 g
1798-1807	U.S. Dime ¹	Liberty	Philadelphia	2.4 g
1807-1836	Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ of U.S. Half Dollar ¹	Liberty	Philadelphia	3.4 g
1786	$\frac{1}{2}$ R ²	Charles III	?	1.3 g
1819	Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ of 8R	Ferdinand VII	?	6.1 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ of "Cross" Pist.	None	?	1.1 g
1807-1836	Cut U.S. Half Dollar ⁵	Liberty	Philadelphia	2.0 g
1801-1803	$\frac{1}{2}$ R ²	Charles IV	Mexico City	1.4 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{8}$ of 8R	Charles IV	?	2.2 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ of 8R	Charles III	?	6.6 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{8}$ of 8R	Ferdinand VII	?	3.2 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{8}$ of 8R	Charles III	?	3.1 g
?	Cut $\frac{1}{5}$ of 2R	Charles III	?	1.0 g
1808	Cut $\frac{1}{8}$ of 8R	Charles IV	?	2.4 g
1772	1R ²	Charles III	Guatemala	3.1 g

¹ One of seven pieces found in a leather pouch, along with a thimble, copper button and straight pin.

² Holed.

³ A real, or 1/8 of a Spanish dollar, was also known in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia as a "levy." (Wordnik online dictionary at www.wordnik.com/words/Levy and personal conversation with Jack Howes).

⁴ A half-real, or 1/16 of a Spanish dollar, was also known as a "medio," "picayune," "fip," "fippenny," "fourpence ha'penny" or "sixpence." (Merriam-Webster online dictionary at www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fippenny%20bit and personal conversation with Jack Howes).

⁵ The standard weight for a U.S. capped bust half dollar from this period was 13.48 g. While it is likely that this piece was intended as a "bit," or 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents, its weight would give it a value closer to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

Sources:

(1) Cande, Kathleen H.; Pehworth, Jared S.; Evans, Michael M.; Jenkins, Aden, *Muffins, Chimneys and Clinkers: Expanding Public Interpretation at Old Davidsonville State Park, Randolph County, Arkansas*, Little Rock: Arkansas Archeological Survey, Year 3 Report, AAS Project 07-01, June 2008, pp. 115-124.

(2) Others as noted above.

Acknowledgement:

Kendra Harris, Davidsonville Historic State Park Superintendent, for patiently answering my questions on a cold, snowy day.

COUNTERFEIT NATIVE 8-REALES UPDATE

(Marc Mayhugh)

In the Winter, 2009, *C4 Newsletter*, I wrote an article questioning whether indigenous native populations of the New World had the technology or resources to produce imitations of the current Spanish coins then in circulation. I concluded that I did not believe that they could produce struck counterfeits of the coin of the realm, although cast counterfeits seemed to be a possibility. It occurred to me that rather than natives producing fakes to fool the population, perhaps unscrupulous persons may have manufactured fake coins to foist upon the uneducated native population.

The focus of that article was a counterfeit 8-reales I had obtained that was listed in a catalog as a native-made coin. The coin was quite crude, yet possessed good enough weight and appearance to have possibly circulated. It looked as though it was worn through circulation. I also located other examples in literature claiming that quite crude Spanish imitations existed, and were professed to be native creations. These examples are found both in English and Spanish publications.

One such publication is *The Onza: Main Book*, by the Calico family. In that reference, an exact copy of my silver 8-reales is plated, but in a higher state of conservation. Only there it is listed in gold, the logical assumption being that either the dies were used to strike both silver and gold counterfeits or that the coins were all struck in silver, and a gold wash was to be applied at a later time. The illustration in the "Onza" book is in black and white and the composition of the metal is not given. Being in a book on gold coins, it is assumed the coin was made of gold.

In the time since I wrote about that piece I have located two more examples of this particular coin. Surprisingly, one example is in gold, and the other in silver. Each coin appeared in a separate Cayon sale. Cayon kindly permitted to use their images for illustration purposes which appear below. The weight of the silver piece is given as 23.7 grams. The weight of the gold piece is not given.

These two pieces are different from both my example and the coin appearing in the Onza book. The fact that four examples exist indicates that they were produced on at least a limited scale. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who might have an example as I find these pieces very interesting.



From: Cayon Auctions, *Money and Medals*, Madrid, January 21, 2011, p. 104, lot 3257.



From: Cayon Auctions, *Highly important Collection of Spanish and Latin American 8 reales and other Coins from the Spanish Empire*, Madrid, February 4, 2012, p.118, lot 523.

2015 SPRING AUCTION RECAP

(Michael Wierzba)

The year 2015 has certainly been one to remember for collectors of colonial coinage. With significant colonial auctions such as the Donald Partrick Part I sale and the Kendall Sale, most collectors have certainly had their pick of some of the best colonial coins to ever cross the auction block.

With that said, the past few months have been a bit slower on the colonial auction front, understandably so. There have been a few sales though that featured some very nice colonial pieces, including the Central States and Long Beach auctions by Heritage.

Many of you may now know that the upcoming sales of the Donald Partrick collection have been indefinitely suspended. While this news has upset some collectors who were looking forward to some of the great rarities that would be available in the near future, this is probably a good thing for our wonderful hobby. With so many amazing coins coming to the market, it was getting harder for prices to sustain their current levels.

While most of us in C4 follow prices and rarities quite closely, many other type collectors may have thought a lot of the classic rarities that came up in multiples during the last year were more common in the marketplace than thought. This is simply not the case, and it could be decades before some of the pieces that were auctioned reappear on the market again.

Anyway, I expect that this year will continue to be extremely strong for colonials with or without the second Partrick auction, and look forward to what the remainder of the year brings to the collecting community. The following are some of the highlights (in my eyes) from sales in April through June. Enjoy!

The Central States Auction by Heritage April 22nd-26th

This auction featured 66 colonials, with some very nice pieces spread throughout.

Lot 3008. American Plantation Token, Newman 8-C, the Sideways 4 Variety; NGC VF35. A rare variety still missing from many collections. This was a relative bargain at \$2,056, especially given how difficult it is to find any example of this rare variant. A good buy for the new owner.

Lot 4901. 1776 Continental Dollar CURRENCY, Double Struck; NGC MS64. An interesting lot as I cannot recall seeing many (if any) double struck Continental Dollars. This piece had good luster for the variety, though was not the nicest example I have seen at this grade level. It brought \$111,625 to a Heritage Live bidder.

Lot 3015. 1787 Massachusetts Cent, R.4-C; PCGS MS62BN. A nice UNC example of this variety, highlighted by its great pedigree – Newcomer, Green and Newman. It brought \$5,875 to an internet bidder.

Lot 3016. 1787 Massachusetts Cent, R.4-D; PCGS MS64BN. A very nice example of this scarcer variety. This piece also boasted a great pedigree, previously owned by Donald Partrick and previously from the famous Eliasberg Collection. Called the finest known for the variety, it sold for \$7,931.

Lot 3023. 1788 New Jersey, Maris 50-f, boldly double struck; NGC VF Details. A wickedly cool coin and only the second major Head Left NJ error I am aware of. This piece featured the all-important two dates not commonly seen on any NJ double strikes. This was a major bargain in the auction, selling for only \$2,585, but was quickly resold shortly after the auction.

Lot 3029. 1787 Fugio, Newman 8-B; PCGS MS64RB. A very attractive Fugio, one that showed ample original mint red and a very nice strike. This piece sold for \$6,756, right about where I expected it to be.

Lot 4902. (1790) Albany Church Penny, No “D” variety; PCGS Fine Details – Damage. A very interesting example of this extremely rare piece. The coin itself was nice and smooth, but the damage noted by PCGS was from two small counterstamps on the obverse, one reading “15”, the other “18”. While certainly these marks took away some of the value, I thought this was a very nice purchase at \$14,688.

Lot 3034. 1794 Franklin Press Token; NGC MS64RB CAC. A very high end example of this popular token, with about as much mint red as one could expect to ever find on this issue. It was popular in the auction, selling for \$5,170.

Lot 4905. Libertas Americana Medal, in copper; NGC MS64BN. A nice example for the grade, with even brown color. A few toning spots and one small nick are noted. It sold for \$19,387 to an internet bidder.

Lot 4906. Libertas Americana Medal, in silver; NGC MS62. A very rare item that does not come to auction very often. This piece was nice for the grade, and featured some attractive subtle toning and no major issues. It sold for \$141,000 in spirited bidding to the internet.

The June Long Beach Auction by Heritage June 4th-7th

Lot 3732. 1652 Willow Tree Sixpence, Noe 1-A; NGC VF Details – Plugged. A well-struck example featuring almost a full tree and date. Even though this coin was plugged, this was a rare opportunity for the colonial specialist to add a highlight type to their collection. This sold for \$32,900, right about at my estimate.

Lot 3734. (1659) Lord Baltimore Fourpence; PCGS VF35 CAC. Another very rare colonial type coin, the smallest of the Lord Baltimore denominations. This piece featured some nice blue toning on a smooth light gray planchet. A few circulation marks were present, and there was a pre-strike linear planchet flaw on the reverse, but it is nicer than most existing examples. It sold for \$24,675 in spirited bidding to a floor bidder.

Lot 3735. (1737) Higley Copper Broad Axe; PCGS VF20 CAC. While there certainly have been a lot of Higley coppers on the market in the past year based upon the three major sales of Newman, Partrick and Kendall, any time a Higley copper comes to market, it is exciting. This piece was well struck for the type, especially on the reverse. Some light roughness is visible on the obverse, but this piece is far above average for the series. It sold for \$76,375 in strong bidding.

Lot 3736. 1786 Non Vi Virtue Vici Copper; PCGS XF40 CAC. Another extremely rare opportunity for the colonial specialist, this is a type that just does not come to market often. It sold for \$47,000.

Lot 3739. 1783 Chalmers Shilling, short worm; NGC VF25. This piece had a very nicely struck reverse, but had some weakness in strike on the obverse, making the birds and snake weak. Some minor scratches were present on both sides, but overall a nice coin for the \$4,112 it sold for.

Lot 3019. Repub. Ameri. Penny, in copper; NGC MS64RB. A very high end and attractive example of this popular Washington type. Not often found with large amounts of mint red, this piece displayed about 50% on both sides. One of the prettiest examples of this type I have seen. It brought \$3,055.

Lot 3020. (1800) Washington Funeral Medal, Urn Reverse; NGC VG Details/Damage. A nice, original example with detail that seems to be at least F15 to my eyes. Some scattered ticks on the obverse is the damage noted by NGC. These pieces are becoming harder and harder to find, and their popularity is very high today. This piece brought \$2,585, a number that may seem strong for the grade given; however, I feel these are extremely undervalued based on their historical significance, and as such expect to see price levels on these medals increase in the near future.

One last lot needs to be noted from June, found in a rather uncommon location for such an item. In the June 1st Bonhams Coins and Medals auction, there was a very attractive Vermont/Immune Columbia RR-1. It was sold as lot 1143, and was graded F12 by NGC, drastically undergraded in our opinion. It featured perfect light brown color and no problems to note. It sold for \$25,740, a very fair number. It goes to show, things show up in places one would not expect.

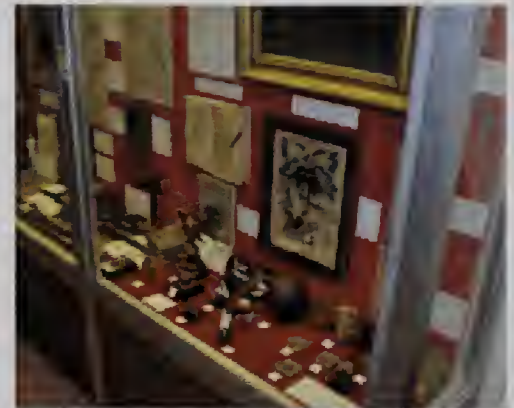
Next up for conventions of note is the annual ANA World's Fair Of Money Convention held once again in Rosemont, IL. While there will not be a Partrick Sale to attend, we expect there will be some very nice colonials both on the floor and in the auction for collectors to ponder. I hope to see many of you there in August. Happy Hunting!

WASHINGTON CROSSING STATE (NJ) PARK MUSEUM - NUMISMATICS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR DISPLAY

On the first day of May, we visited the Washington Crossing State Park Museum in Titusville, NJ. This little-known museum has an impressive collection of colonial coins and paper. In the display entitled “Numismatics of the Revolutionary War,” compliments of the Swan Historical Foundation. We noted the following:

- Large Planchet Pine Tree Shilling
- Two Massachusetts Cents
- Two Massachusetts Half-cents
- St. Patrick farthing
- St. Patrick halfpenny
- Wood’s Hibernia Farthing
- Wood’s Hibernia Halfpence
- Kentucky Token
- Connecticut copper
- Three NJ coppers
- Four Fugios
- Franklin Press
- Georgius Triumpho
- Liberty & Security Cent and Half-cent
- Washington Grate Token
- North Wales Halfpence
- Three Washington & Independence Cents
- Unity States Cent
- Washington Double Headed Cent
- Two dozen plus Colonial Paper bills
- Selection of Betts and Washingtonia material
- Representative foreign coins that circulated here

In other cases were additional Colonial and Washingtonia material (e.g., three Washington funeral medals including a skull and crossbones, GW button, Wyon medal). All of the coins and paper money were in really great condition (typically EF or better). In addition to the numismatic display, the museum features an extraordinary collection of Revolutionary War memorabilia – letters, relics, maps, etc.



Representative Display Case



Colonial Coins and Medals



Colonial Paper Bills



Leo Shane, Ray Williams,
and Syd Martin at the museum

Visiting this museum would be a great day-trip for anyone in the area.



ANA 2015 SUMMER SEMINAR – A ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

(Leo Shane)

For those of you who have not been to an ANA Summer Seminar, you are missing out on a chance to escape the real world for 5 days of a numismatic high. In June, I attended my first Summer Seminar at the urgings of Ray Williams. I was not dis-appointed and now urge all of you to make the trip to Colorado Springs if you can. From arriving on Saturday until leaving Thursday morning you are immersed in Numismatics.

The seminar is held on the campus of Colorado College with all meals and events held there. The food is cafeteria style, so no gourmet meals, but every time you sit down you meet someone new. It's interesting to see what others collect and how they form their collections. The ANA office, library and museum are a one-minute walk away, making visits easy and convenient during breaks; they even have extended hours to allow the seminar attendees more time to visit. There are "bull sessions" and other activities in the evenings just in case you have not had enough during the day. There are also evening trips to tourist sites, or you can just sit in the lounge and talk with your classmates, instructors, ANA staff, authors, academics and researchers until you've had your fill.

Of course the main purpose in coming to Colorado are the sessions themselves. There are many topics to choose from. Ancients to Modern, US and Foreign, Grading, Technology, History and more are covered in various sessions. I choose to attend the session entitled Numismatic Paper of Early America taught by C4 members John Kraljevich and Erik Goldstein. John is a professional numismatist, cataloger, columnist, researcher and dealer. Erik is the curator of numismatics and mechanical arts (weapons, tools, etc.) at Colonial Williamsburg, VA. We had 18 students in the class including 4 young numismatists. Knowledge of the Colonial era varied from novice to expert.

Before the session, I knew very little about Numismatic Paper (Fiscal Paper as well as Currency) but had an interest in learning more. Once in the session, I knew that I would not be disappointed. For anyone who has heard John and Eric speak, you know that you are going to get more than just a description of the numismatic material and the technology behind it. They take you on a journey where you can feel the history behind the paper you are studying. Hundreds of examples of currency and fiscal documents were passed around for us to examine. It is very cool to hold a piece of paper that was signed by John Hancock, printed by Benjamin Franklin or written by George Washington or one of the British generals. Through the currency and documents, along with commentary by John and Eric, you can feel the political climate of that colony at that time. Was there still loyalty to King George III? Were the seeds of separation growing? And finally, the symbols of freedom and independence are all seen on the paper of early America. Now, when I look at Colonial Currency or fiscal paper, I see more than the words and symbols. John and Eric give you the meaning behind the paper.

Again, I highly recommend going to an ANA summer seminar. You'll come back with a different outlook on the coins and paper we collect – you'll also experience a Numismatic Rocky Mountain high.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Heads up! The dates for our convention next year are 5-8 November 2015. Block it out now in your calendars!

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE SOUGHT

I'm currently undertaking a comprehensive study of the Castorland jeton. I'm approaching the study from both sides of the Atlantic, relying heavily on French sources, and my study entails operational details from the manufacture of flans to the mechanical workings of the screw press; the history of jetons as they evolved from arithmetical counters to monarchical presentation pieces; events leading up to the establishment of the New York Company; the biography of Benjamin Duvivier; etc. culminating in detailed descriptions of variants struck from at least one original die. As you can see it's a big work, but I've been at it quite a few years and am wonderfully engaged in the project. Here is a "finding list" of details I'm looking for, as well as photos if possible:

1. If the specimen is in a slab, all the label information.
2. Identify the metal, gold, silver, copper, bronze. If silver, indicate thin or thick planchet.
3. If edge-stamped, identify the symbol and the lettering and location of the stamping (such as 6 o'clock relative the obverse.)
4. Die alignment: coin turn/medal turn.
5. Describe state of any reverse die failure, perceptible bulge, advanced crack, etc.
6. Describe reverse caustic incursion, sometimes identified as rust, at the right handle of the vessel.
7. Describe any other identifying factors such as rim bumps, scratches, spots, unfilled letters of legends, etc. that would help identify the piece if it were re-encapsulated at some future time.
8. Indicate the provenance, if known. If you currently own the specimen feel free to identify it with your name for the benefit of future owners.

Please contact Chester L. Sullivan at csull@ku.edu

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COMPLETE C4 NEWSLETTER CDs FOR SALE

C4 is making available on CD of a complete set of *C4 Newsletters* from 1993 (vol.1, no.1) through 2011 (vol.19, no. 4). The format is a fully searchable PDF files, which makes life and research much easier. Thanks to Randy Clark, Ray Williams and Gary Trudgen for their vision and extremely hard work, which now lets us offer these wonderful research tools to you for \$50 plus \$4.00 p&h for members or \$75 plus \$4.00 p&h for non-members. To order, please contact either (a) Wayne Shelby at dughistory@juno.com or at P.O. Box 568 Rancocas, NJ 08073 or (b) Charlie Rohrer at RohrerC@cadmus.com or at P.O. Box 25 Mountville, PA 17554. Please send your check made out to C4 to Charlie Rohrer at the above address.

Obtaining Back Copies of C4 Newsletter and C4 Auction Catalogues

Wayne Shelby has agreed to store the back copies of the *C4 Newsletter*. People wishing to purchase back issues that are still available should send their money to our treasurer, Charlie Rohrer, whose contact data are at page 2. Upon receipt of the money, he will contact Wayne, who will mail out the material. Back copies of the *Newsletter* are \$10 for the first and \$8 for all after that placed at the same time. If you have questions of what material is available, you can contact Wayne at:

P.O. Box 568
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C4 Offers Important Colonial Books

For more information on the following books, published by the Colonial Coin Collectors Club (C4), visit the C4 website at www.colonialcoins.org. These books may be ordered directly from: Charles Davis' website: www.numisbook.com.

- (1) Carlotto, Tony, *The Copper Coins of Vermont and Those Bearing the Vermont Name*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 1998. Price: \$165.
- (2) Jordan, Lou. *John Hull, The Mint, and The Economics of Massachusetts Coinage*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2002. Price: \$10.
- (3) Martin, Sydney. *The Hibernia Coinage of William Wood (1722-1724)*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2007. Price: \$85.
- (4) Martin, Sydney. *The Rosa Americana Coinage of William Wood*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2012. Price \$85.
- (5) Siboni, Roger S., Howes, Jack L. and Ish, A. Buell, *New Jersey State Coppers. History. Description. Collecting.*, The American Numismatic Society and Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2013. Price: \$195.
- (6) Vlack, Robert. *An Illustrated Catalogue of the French Billon Coinage in the Americas*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2004. Price: \$50.
- (7) *New Jersey State Coppers -- History * Description * Collecting*, authored by Roger Siboni, Jack Howes, and Buell Ish and co-published by ANS and C4 is now available. Purchases may also be made by mail (via a form that can be downloaded) or directly through the ANS website using either PayPal or credit card; be sure to indicate whether you are a C4 or ANS member.

The Daniel Frank Sedwick database of fake cobs is now on ForgeryNetwork :

<http://www.forgerynetwork.com/default.aspx?keyword=cob> ..
<http://www.forgerynetwork.com/asset.aspx?id=QEjfd5ZR~x~8=>

C4 Membership Dues

Annual dues are currently \$30.00 for Regular Membership (\$40 if residing outside the United States) and \$10.00 for Junior Membership (under 18 years of age; \$15 is non US resident). They are payable on a calendar year basis... due January 1. The year through which you are paid appears after your name on the mailing address label on the *C4 Newsletter* envelope. Life Memberships can be purchased for 25 times the annual membership cost, or \$750.00. You may mail checks (made out to "C4") to:

Charlie Rohrer, C4 Treasurer
PO Box 25
Mountville, PA 17554

Thank you for paying in a timely manner... It makes his job easier and will be much appreciated!

NEW RESOURCE FOR THE C4 NEWSLETTER

Our C4 Newsletter now has an index available on our website at www.colonialcoins.org. There are actually two indexes: one by author and a second by topic/title. This is a beginning and the index will improve over time. We have intentions of updating the index within a week or two of every issue being shipped. We ask past authors and contributors to the C4N to please review their work in the index and forward any corrections/additions/suggestions to Ray Williams at njraywms@optonline.net or give a call.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

In accordance with our by-laws, those who have recently joined C4 as provisional members are listed below. If any current C4 member in good standing has a reason any of the following should be denied membership in C4, please contact either your Regional VP or the President of the Club, Jim Rosen. The new provisional members, with their home states, are :

James Bailey - RI		Jeffrey Gresser - NV
Jeff Burke - NJ		Sydney Scheinman - FL
Bill Dancy - VA		John Schmerfeld - VA
Dennis Fraser - MI		Paul Sontag - OH

C4 LIBRARY NEWS

(Leo Shane)

Below are new items acquired the club since the last C4 Library Update. They are now available for loan by all C4 members. A complete list of library holdings and instructions on how to borrow them is available at the C4 website www.colonialcoins.org. Thanks to all who have donated items.

Thank You to those who have checked their old copies of auction catalogs and donated them to the library. There's still room for more. The Library is interested in getting copies of past auction catalogs that we currently do not have. Take a look at the list shown on the club website. Any that are not already in the library are greatly appreciated. Remember, all catalogs that have at least one Colonial will have the colonial section separated and added to the library archive. Catalogs with major colonial content will be retained in their entirety. Thanks

Books, Manuscripts & Auction Catalogs:

Bowers & Merena, *The Collections of Thomas H. Sebring, Gunther P. Garbe and other important properties*, 22-13 March 1996, Baltimore, MD – Donated by Steve Chandler.

Daniel Frank Sedwick, *Treasure and World & US Coin Auction 17*, 29-30 April 2015, Winter Park, FL – Donated by Daniel Sedwick.

Smith, Bruce, *Connecticut Coppers*, Presentation at the C4 Convention 31 October 2014 – Donated by Bruce Smith.

Hielscher, Udo, *Financing the American Revolution*, Museum of American Financial History, New York NY, 2003 – Donated by Eric Goldstein.

Coin Galleries, *Ancient and Modern Coins of the World and the United States featuring The Fredrick S. Knobloch Collection*, 12 November 1986, New York, NY – Donated by Leo Shane.

Harmer Rooke Numismatists, *The Curator Sale*, 6 July 1988, New York, NY – Donated by Leo Shane.

Stacks Bowers, *The February 2015 Americana Auction*, 5,6,10 February 2015, New York, NY – Donated by Stacks-Bowers.

Stacks Bowers, *The Henry P. Kendall Foundation Collection*, 26 March 2015, Baltimore, MD – Donated by Stacks-Bowers.

Heritage, *US Coin Auction – Selections From the Eric P. Newman Collection Part IV*, 16-17 May 2014, New York, NY – Donated by Heritage.

Heritage, *US Coin Auction – Donald G. Partrick Collection*, 8 January 2015, Orlando, FL – Donated by Heritage.

Suggestions for additions to the library are always appreciated. Please consider donating books, auction catalogs, etc. to the library. Remember, those who are learning about colonials now are those who will be buying your coins later. *Thank You*, my E Mail is [Leo J Shane@hotmail.com](mailto:Leo_J_Shane@hotmail.com) or write to me at 1130 Woods Lane. Warminster PA 18974.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Grayscale ads for this newsletter can be purchased as follows (color ads are 50% more in each category):

	1 issue	2 issues	3 issues	4 issues	Copy Size
1 page	\$200	\$300	\$450	\$600	6" x 9"
1/2 page	\$125	\$180	\$250	\$350	6" x 4.5"

Covers cost somewhat more (please inquire – generally \$200 additional). If you want to include a photo with your ad there will be an additional \$10 charge. A black and white photo will be needed, but the size can be adjusted. Please send check with your ad. We accept camera-ready copy or any Microsoft Word compatible computer file.

All members also have the right to include a free classified ad in the newsletter of up to 10 lines of text.

NOTICE: The Colonial Coin Collectors Club does not review the ads provided for accuracy, nor does it assess any items offered for sale relative to authenticity, correct descriptions, or the like. C4 is not to be considered a party to any transactions occurring between members based on such ads, and will in no way be responsible to either the buyer or seller.

COLONIAL VIRGINIA COPPERS: I am collecting all information, images and data on colonial Virginian coppers. Please share with me your photos of counterstamped, defaced, or unusual coppers. In addition copies of any stories, old newsprint articles or papers relating to the Virginians would be appreciated. Thank you. You can contact me at rogermoore435@yahoo.com. Thank you!! Roger Moore

"Colonial, cut, countermarked and Caribbean coins (and some other odds and ends as well). I am starting to sell a few pieces and have put up a website to that end. Please take a look at eastrockcoins.com. Peter Griffin."

NEWS RELEASE Hello fellow C4 members. I would like to announce that I am working on another attribution guide in the same style of my 'New Jersey Coppers' guide. It will be full of information on the Massachusetts Cents and Half Cents making attribution of this series very simple. The new guide will debut at the C4 convention this November in Baltimore. **Packed with over 200 informative pages covering Cents & Half cents – with this guide anyone will be able to attribute the Mass Coppers! Large 6” photos of each variety, with attribution points outlined. Stay tuned!**

Mike Demling



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Mike Shutty: If you are a serious collector, I think you will like my book on collecting. If you have ever wondered why we devote so much time and energy to studying the colonial coins we all love, I think this book will get you started on a journey of self-discovery. Check it out.

One Coin is Never Enough: How and why we collect.

My book is available directly from Krause Publishing or from Internet sellers like Amazon.com. It is not expensive, and I think C4 members will like this book.



✧The Earliest American Coppers. Contemporary Counterfeit British & Irish Halfpence and Farthings. My personal collections built over the past decade are now for sale. We now have a webpage up and running with most coins imaged and priced. More will go up from time to time. I also have some Colonials and Spanish American Colonials-Cobs up. There are currently about 12 categories populated with coins for sale, they are; British George II, British George III, Irish George II, Irish George III, Counterstamps, Cast Cfts, Mules, Errors, Regal's Colonials and Cobs. In the near future I will be adding some interesting Misc. I am still selling CD's of my collections, the details are on the webpages. Postage is always free for C4 and EAC members. Please use the savings towards next years dues ;-). Please visit the webpages and feel free to email with any questions.

Clement V. Schettino, PO Box 1093, Saugus, MA 01906

copperclem@comcast.net

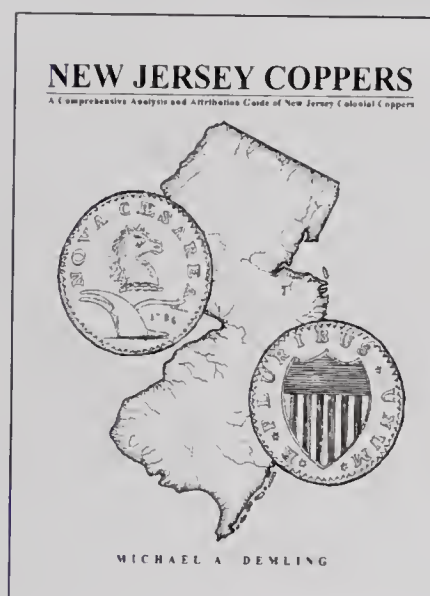
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I aim for above average to gem for the grade Fugios with minimal to no plan flaws, which are rare! The following are for sale:

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1787 N 6-W	R4; PCGS VF-30; Average++ for the grade; Great tan to brown color	\$ 2,950
1787 N 9-P	E4; PCGS XF-45; Choice surfaces and color save for small flaw on sundial	\$ 2,950
1787 N 12-M	R3; VF-25 nice: ex Fricke collection	\$ 1,985
1787 N 12-LL	R7!!; F-15, net VG-10; nice tan color	\$ 1,950
1787 N 15-H	R4; PCGS VF-35; Choice surfaces and color; No naked eye flaws – RARE!	\$ 1,975
1787 N 15-Y	R2; 8 pt star; PCGS XF-40; Choice tan and smooth; trivial marks under great color on back	\$ 3,850
1787 N 19-M	R6 and tough; VF-35, net VG-10, dark; ex Retz, Fricke collections	\$ 1,500
1787 N 19-SS	R5; VF-25 and well above average; ex Fricke collection	\$ 4,900

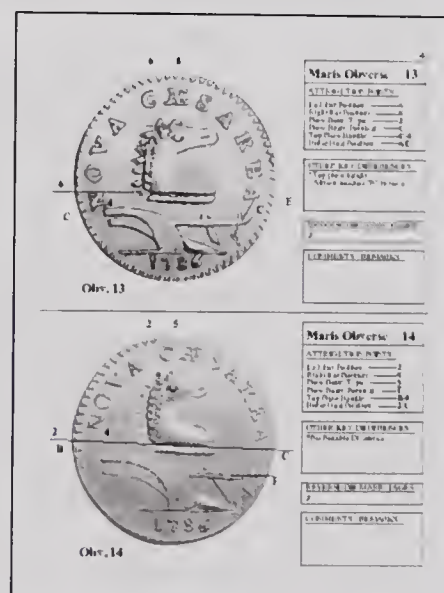


Not since Dr. Maris published his work on the New Jersey Coppers in 1881 has there been a Comprehensive Analysis and Attribution Guide of New Jersey Colonial coppers.

A new publication of 228 pages in five chapters outlining methods for Attributing the New Jersey Colonial Copper Coinage. With two chapters exclusively dedicated to large photos showing Obverse and Reverse die combinations.

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Michael Demling ~ PO Box 211 ~ Linwood, NJ 08221

I am interested in acquiring unusual (e.g., mis-struck, counterstamped, love tokens) and high condition examples of 1721-B, 1721-H, and 1722-H nine denier French colonial pieces. I'm also seeking unusual edge markings on Kentucky pieces. Syd Martin: sfmartin5@comcast.net or 215-348-8149.

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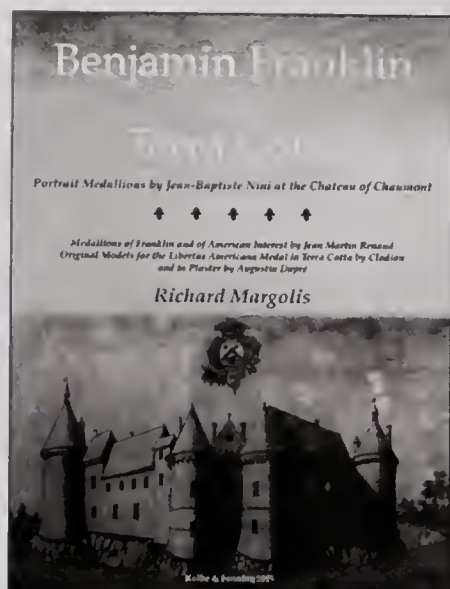




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Philosophical Society Library & Past President,
The Friends of Benjamin Franklin*



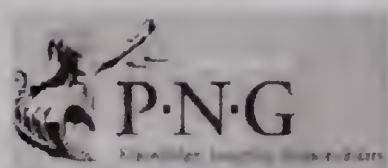


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THE C4 NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT NUMBER 2 JULY 2015

THE SILVER COINS OF MASSACHUSETTS: EVOLUTION OF MINTING TECHNIQUES

CHRISTOPHER J. SALMON, M.D.



COINAGE OF THE AMERICAS CONFERENCE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
OCTOBER 30, 2014

THE SILVER COINS OF MASSACHUSETTS: EVOLUTION OF MINTING TECHNIQUES

CHRISTOPHER J. SALMON, M.D.

Tonight we'll examine the different methods used to strike the Massachusetts Silver coins. We'll look at the coins' many unusual physical features and, mindful of historical context, discover how they were made. Much has been said about the minting technique of these coins since the emergence of American colonial numismatics as an avocation and science in the 19th century, leading to occasional conflict and controversy. We'll see that some widely held beliefs don't hold up to careful examination, especially when viewed in proper historical context and when the physical evidence is taken fully into account. The coins themselves speak the loudest and most vividly. If we listen, they will tell their story.



FOUR SERIES OF MASSACHUSETTS SILVER COINS WILLOW TREE COINS: OUTLIERS

These are coins of the greatest historical importance - the first struck in the British North American colonies. Coinage began in the first generation after the Great Migration and just 32 years after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. They were struck from

1652 to 1682 in four series, shown above in chronological order.

We can appreciate many changes when comparing coins of the different series. These changes reflect an evolution of minting techniques. When looking closely at the four series it is the Willow Tree coins that immediately catch our eye. They are outliers, with their haphazard appearance. The earlier-struck New England coinage was well made and regular in appearance, with good obverse and reverse impressions. The Oak and Pine Tree coins, made after the Willow Tree coins, are also well executed. Many of their varieties are quite beautiful. As a series, the Willow Tree coinage stands alone in its erratic appearance and has been scorned by some authors and numismatists as a result.¹

WILLOW TREE COINAGE: MINTING TECHNIQUE CONTROVERSY

There has also been recent controversy about how the Willow Tree coins were made. In the 1940s, Sydney Noe of the American Numismatic Society wrote that the Willow Tree coins were hammered, but done so without first taking the precaution of fixing the lower die in an anvil, resulting in the multiple and poor strikes characteristic of the series.² Several others have since affirmed a hammering technique for the Willow Tree coinage, including noted researchers Walter Breen and Phil Mossman.³ A major dissent came from scholar and respected cataloguer Michael Hodder, who theorized that the Willow Tree coinage was struck with a rocker press,⁴ a machine that Hodder had already shown was used to mint the later Oak Tree coins.



We will provide ample data to disprove the rocker press theory of Willow Tree coin production and will demonstrate, instead, that *only* a hammering technique can account for the physical and historical evidence and explain why the Willow Tree coins appear as they do.

The anomalous appearance of the Willow Tree Coins has sometimes been attributed to the inexperience of Massachusetts coiners in the use of a newly-acquired rocker press, which produced doubling, it was argued, through its reciprocating action.⁵ But, based on inspection of Willow Tree coins, this is really not plausible. We see no gradual improvement within the Willow Tree series, as minters would have gained experience, to support this hypothesis. We cannot convincingly identify late Willow Tree coins of significantly better quality than those earlier in the series, nor a trend toward (or even remotely approaching) the quality of the Oak Tree pieces. There is no similarity between putatively late Willow Tree coins (such as this 3-E Willow Tree shilling) and early Oak Tree coins (such as this 1-A Oak Tree shilling), shown below.



I think you'll agree that it's not even close. In comparing Willow Tree coins to Oak Tree coins we see a difference of *kind*, not degree. The Willow Tree coins lack the characteristic features of the Oak Tree coins, and in turn, the Oak Tree coins have none of the defining attributes of the Willow Tree coins.

The Willow Tree coins were not made the same way as the Oak Tree coins. They certainly were not struck on a rocker press. Rather, they were made by essentially the same process used to strike the slightly earlier New England coinage. This technique was

devised by experienced silversmiths and is similar to the hammering of touchmarks on silverware.

MINTING TECHNIQUE OF THE NEW ENGLAND COINAGE

Mintmaster John Hull and his associate Robert Sanderson, Sr., were the foremost American silversmiths of their time, their partnership the first-established silversmith enterprise in British North America. Silversmithing remained their principal occupation long after their minting activities began.⁶ These expert silversmiths had no training or experience as coiners.⁷ This is reflected by their earliest coins, which were produced by techniques familiar to them and not according to orthodox minting standards.

The coinage was produced side-by-side with their other silver goods. As noted by Lou Jordan and by Patricia Kane at Yale, the Massachusetts silver coins were struck in the same small workspace - the same 16' x 16' room - as all of their holloware and flatware⁸, including pieces like the caudle cup shown below, made around 1665.



Note on the right side of the cup the Latinized “IH” form of John Hull’s initials in his touchmark and on the left side Robert Sanderson’s touchmark with his initials. These touchmarks were applied by hand, using a punch and a silversmith’s hammer. This is exactly the same way they made their first coins, the New England or NE coinage.



As mandated by the Colony's governing authority, the Massachusetts General Court, the NE coins had the NE emblem on the obverse and the denomination, in Roman numerals, on the reverse.⁹

The NE stamp was applied at the 12:00 position of the obverse with a punch resembling a large touchmark. The flan was then turned over and stamped with the denomination punch at the reverse side of the 6:00 position - at the opposite end of the flan - to avoid marring the impression of the NE punch.

For each impression the punch was struck with a silversmith's hammer on a cold silver flan. The flan rested on a large steel anvil embedded in a tree trunk.¹⁰ This is *exactly* the same method a silversmith uses to apply a touchmark. And you see that no special minting equipment was needed. Minting was carried out with regular silversmith equipment and procedures. Since no dedicated equipment was needed, minting could begin immediately after the court decree was issued, and this is exactly what occurred.

NE PUNCH ONLY marginally USEFUL AS A DIE

This silversmith's cold striking technique proved adequate for the NE coins, but nonetheless, Noe observed that the impressions on NE shillings were usually slightly incomplete.¹¹ Why is this? It could be due to the larger size of the coin punches compared to touchmark punches, as well as to slight angulation of the hand-held coin punch during hammering.

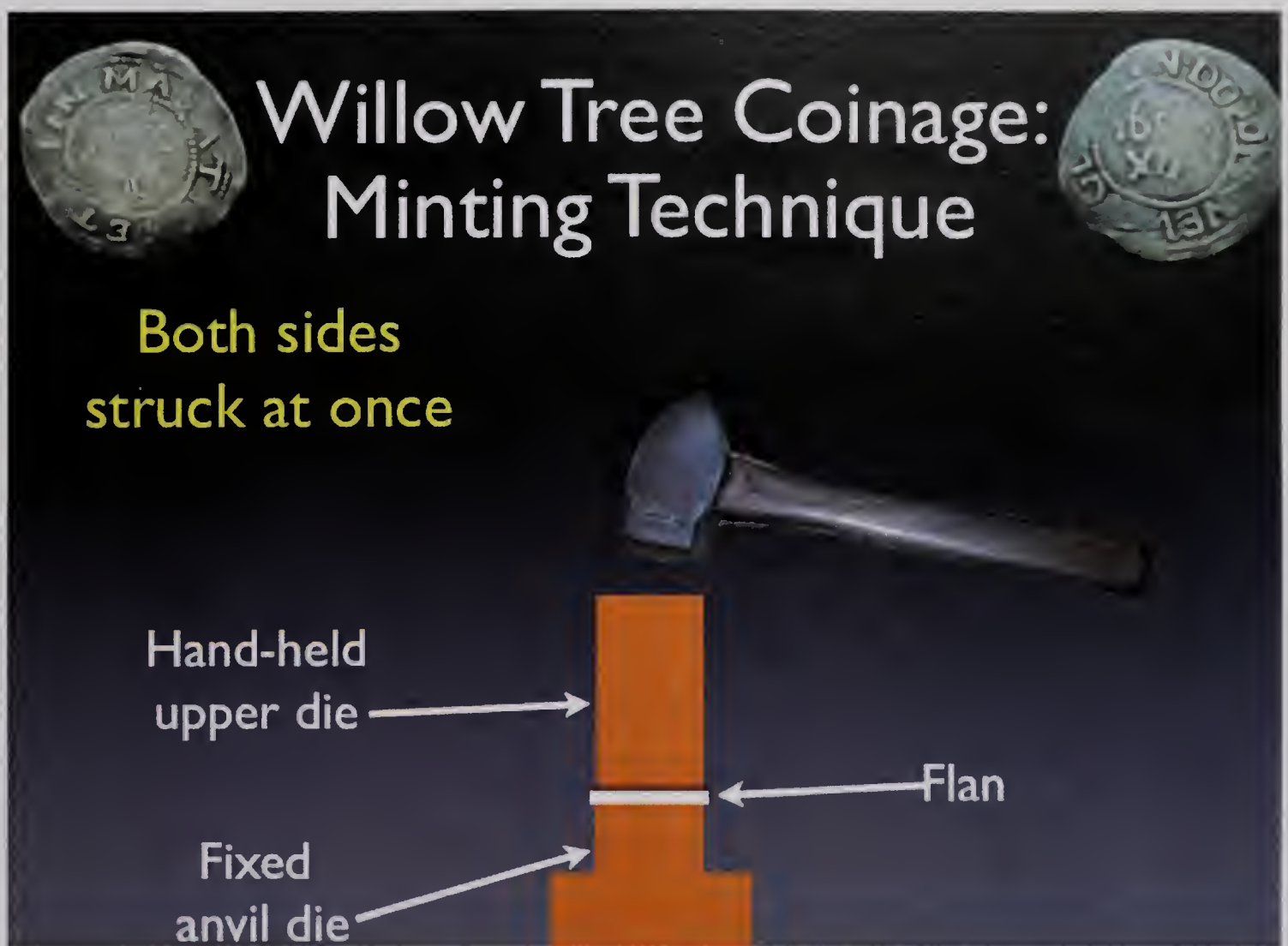
Interestingly, we see that even the much smaller diameter touchmark impressions on silverware are often uneven and incomplete because of punch angulation, like the Sanderson mark that we see below, incompletely struck on its left and lower margins.



We see on this NE shilling that the NE impression on the obverse is much softer and shallower than the robust reverse impression. But this is not due to angulation. Both are struck squarely. This disparity between NE and XII impressions is due to the significant difference in punch surface areas. Look closely. This relative softness of the NE impression is of critical importance. The NE punch is only marginally useful as a die. And we'll keep this in mind, referring to it often, as we discuss the minting technique of the Willow Tree coinage.

MINTING TECHNIQUE OF THE WILLOW TREE COINAGE

The rather plain NE coins may have seemed fitting and elegant to a seventeenth century New England observer - and, indeed, intuitive and familiar to the silversmiths striking them - but the austerity of their design quickly led to strong concerns about clipping and counterfeiting. Soon after the minting of NE coins began, the General Court decreed that coin designs would be changed immediately to include a tree and prescribed legends, and the Willow Tree coinage commenced.

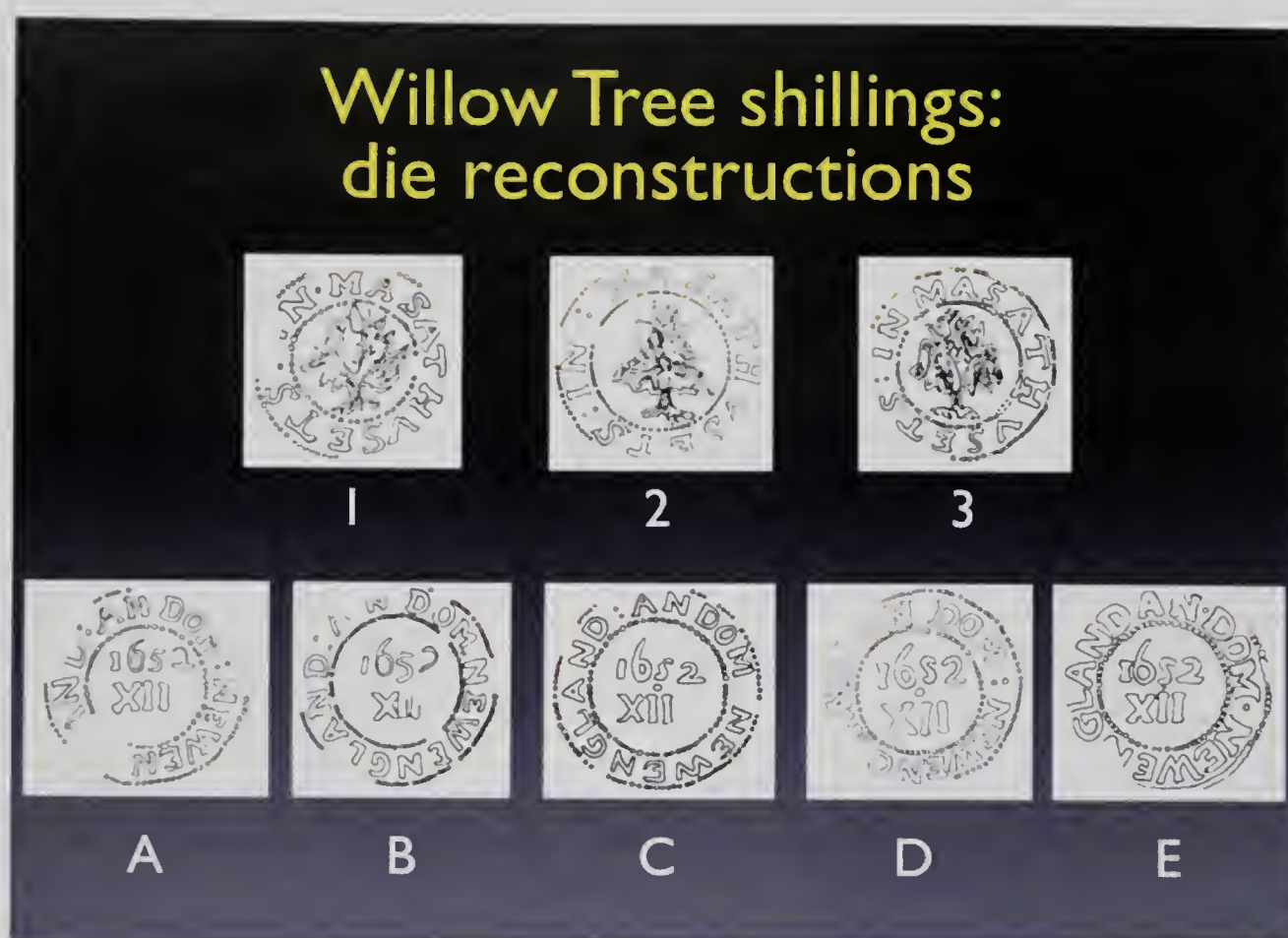


Physical evidence from the Willow Tree coins, which we'll examine now in detail, shows quite clearly that they were produced by methods very similar to those used to make the NE coins. They too were cold struck with a silversmith's hammer. But there were important differences. Full-sized dies replaced the punches of the NE series and both sides of the coin were struck simultaneously. The lower die was fixed in an anvil. The silver flan was placed on this lower die. The upper die was held in the free hand during hammering. Multiple strikes were used for each coin - typically three such strikes. This was done in a systematic, intentional manner, as we'll see.

These curious multiple strikes are the rule for the Willow Tree coinage. Very weak strikes are common. Central parts of the design, such as trees on the obverse and the dates on the reverse, are often very weak or distorted. Willow Tree coins also have distorted lettering, making legends unreadable. We will explain all of these curious features in due course. With their disorganized features, attribution of Willow Tree coins can be a challenge.

Fortunately, Noe created composite reconstructions of the image that each Willow Tree die would produce if not for the multiple strikes. These die reconstructions are essential for attributing Willow tree coins and are included here and in my book,¹³ courtesy of the ANS.

For the Willow Tree shillings there are three obverse dies, numbered 1-3, and five reverse dies, designated A-E.



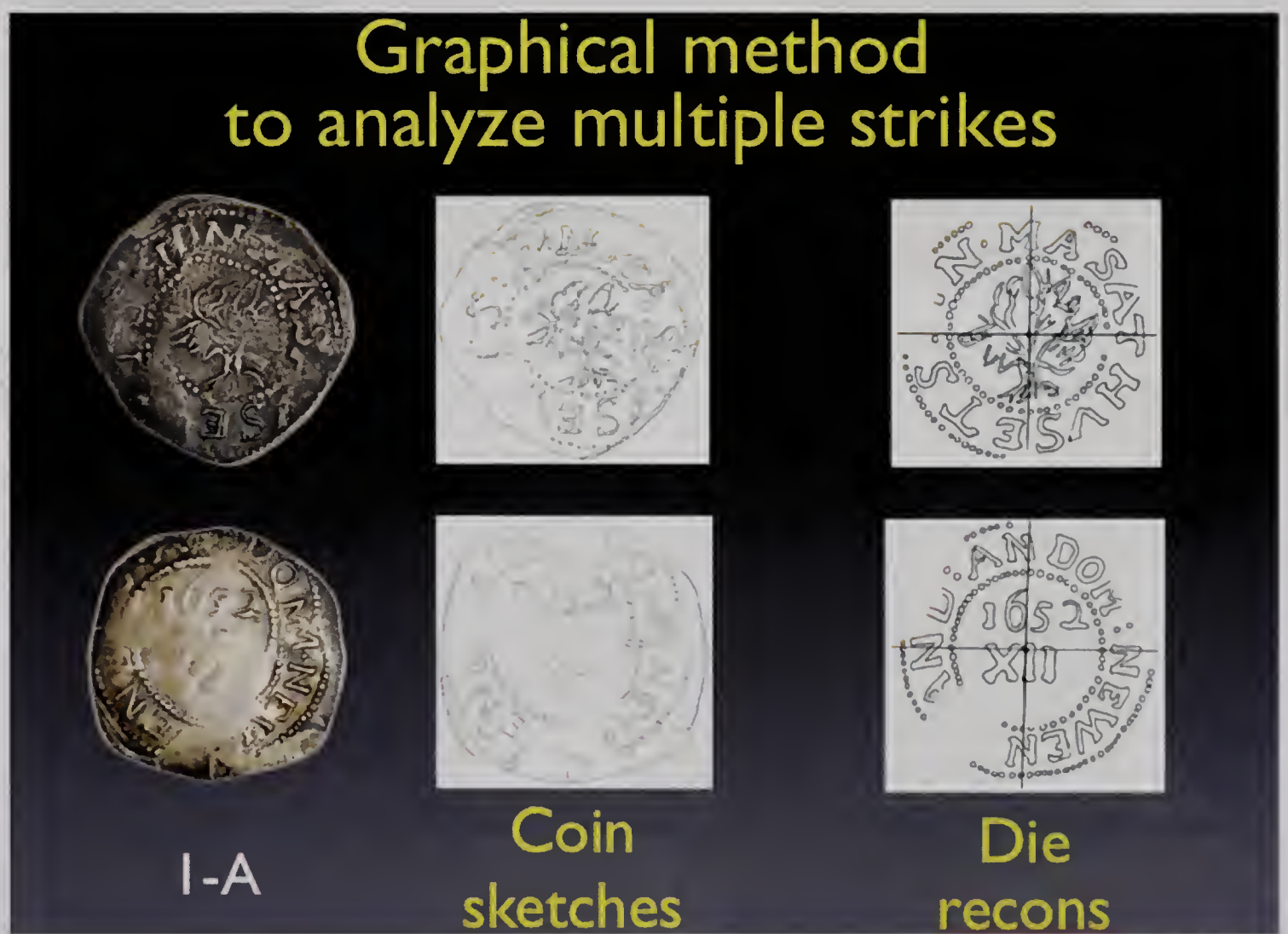
Willow Tree sixpence were all struck from a single pair of dies. Willow Tree threepence were all made from their own single pair of dies.



GRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF WILLOW TREE STRIKES

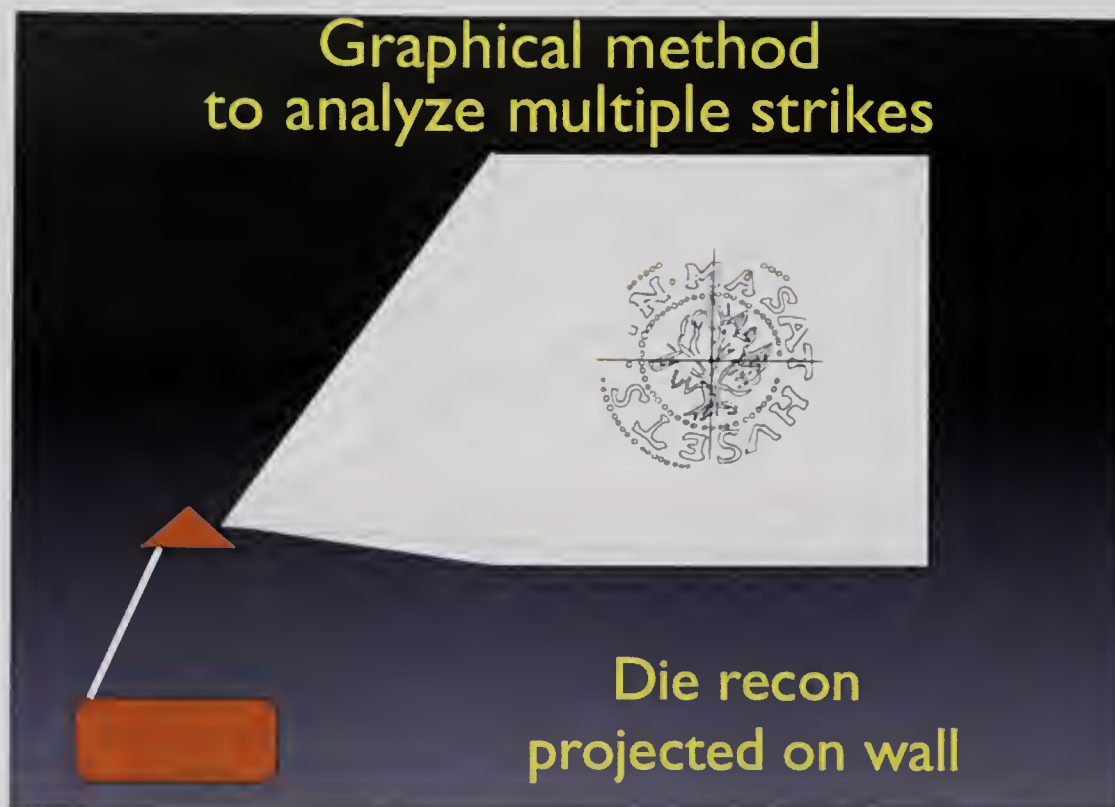
The Noe die reconstructions are also extremely useful in research, especially in analyzing the pattern of multiple strikes of the Willow Tree coins and, ultimately, in showing us how these coins were made. Using the die reconstructions we can show the number of strikes for a given coin and also see how the dies moved between strikes.¹⁴ Here's how we do it:

First, sketches of the obverse and reverse of the coin are made. I've chosen a 1-A Willow Tree shilling. The Noe die reconstructions for that variety are then selected. Since this is a 1-A Willow Tree shilling the "1" obverse die reconstruction and the "A" reverse die reconstruction are used.



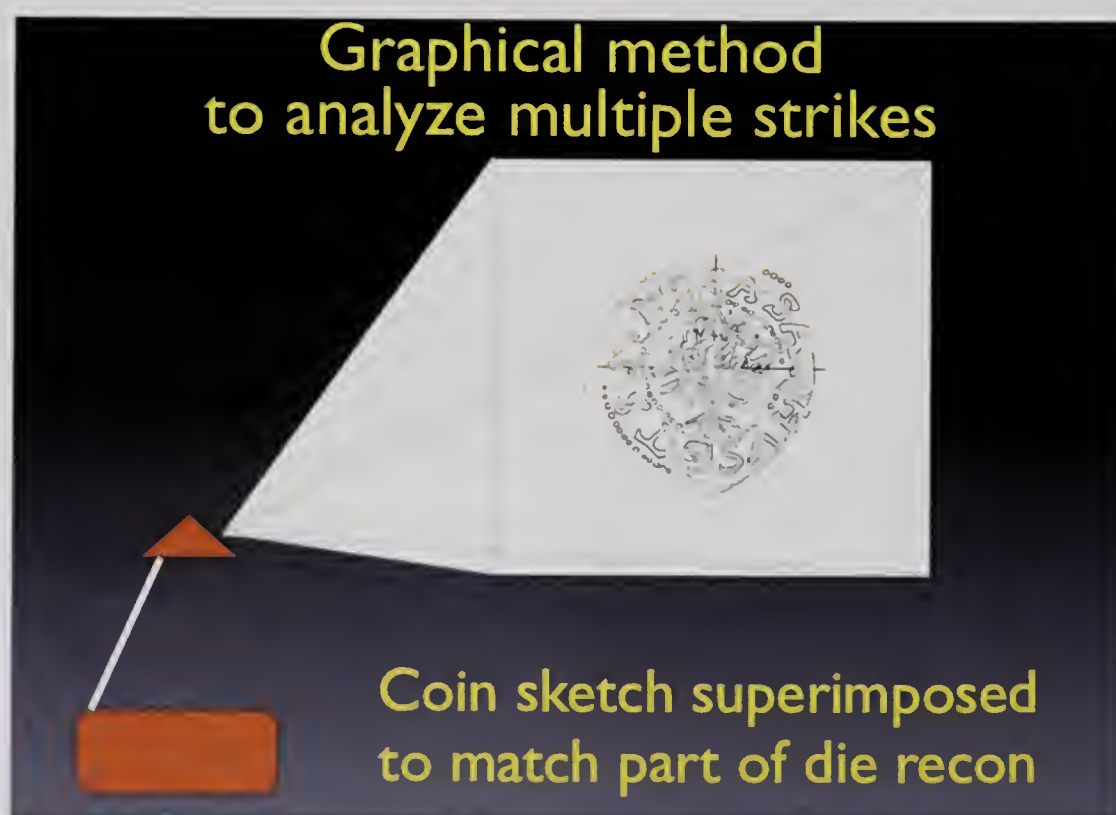
Notice that I've drawn vertical and horizontal lines on the die reconstructions. I'll refer to these criss-crossing lines as the die's orthogonal axes. They intersect at the center of the die.

Each side of the coin is analyzed separately. Let's look at the obverse first. The die reconstruction of the obverse, with orthogonal axes drawn on it, is projected on a wall with an overhead projector.

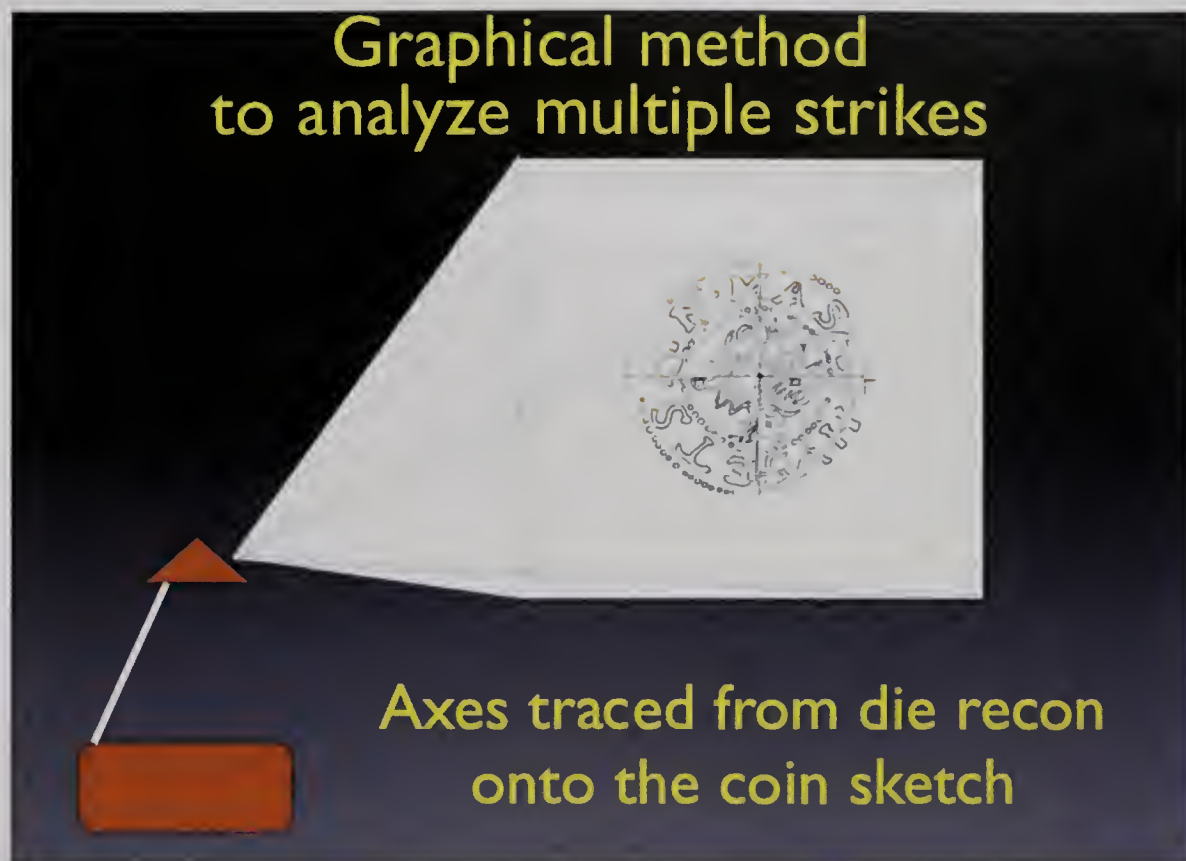


The sketch of the coin obverse is then held up in the air and superimposed on the projected image of the Noe die reconstruction, matched up with some elements of the die reconstruction.

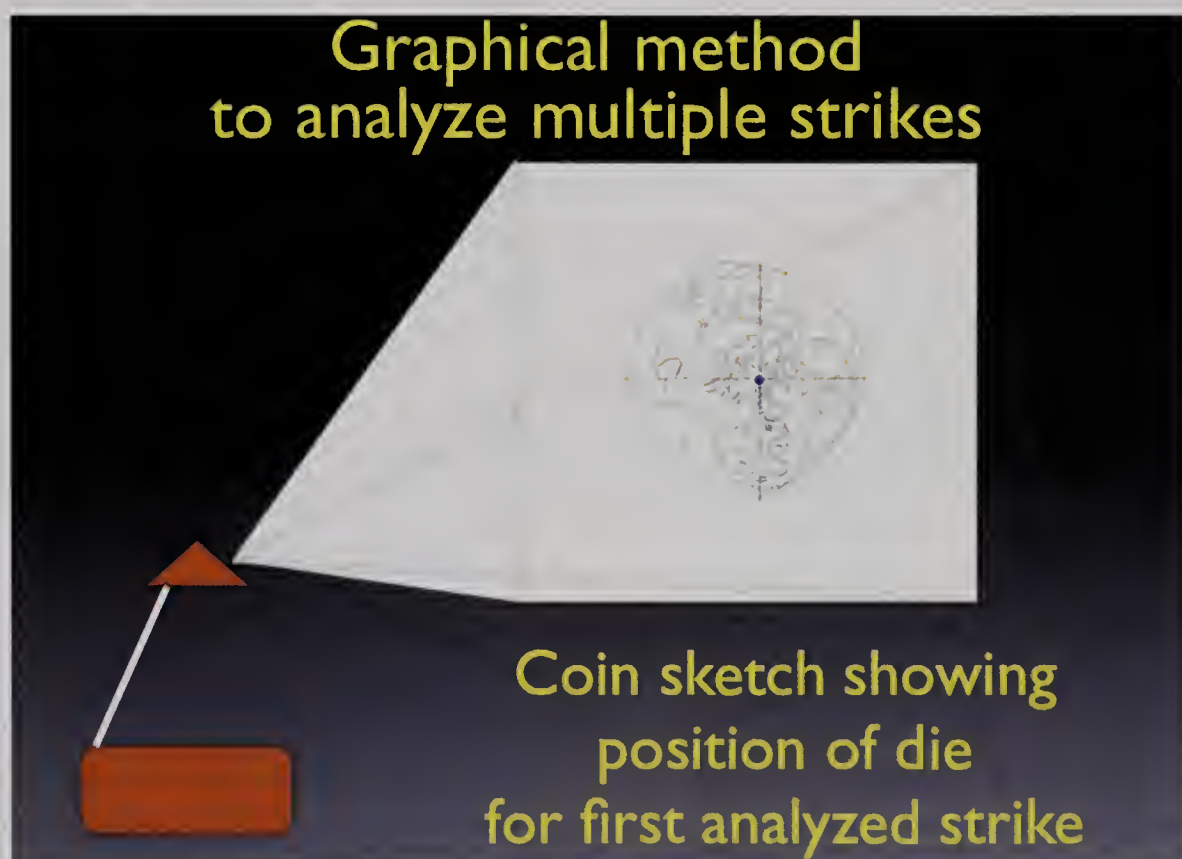
Here we see the coin sketch and the die reconstruction superimposed, portions of the coin sketch matched up with parts of the die reconstruction.



The orthogonal axes of the die reconstruction for that position are then traced onto the coin sketch. This shows us how the die was positioned for that strike.



Now take the die reconstruction away (take it off the overhead projector) and we see the coin sketch by itself, with axes traced onto it from the die reconstruction, showing the position of the die for that strike. A dot is drawn where the axes cross. This is the center of the die for that strike.



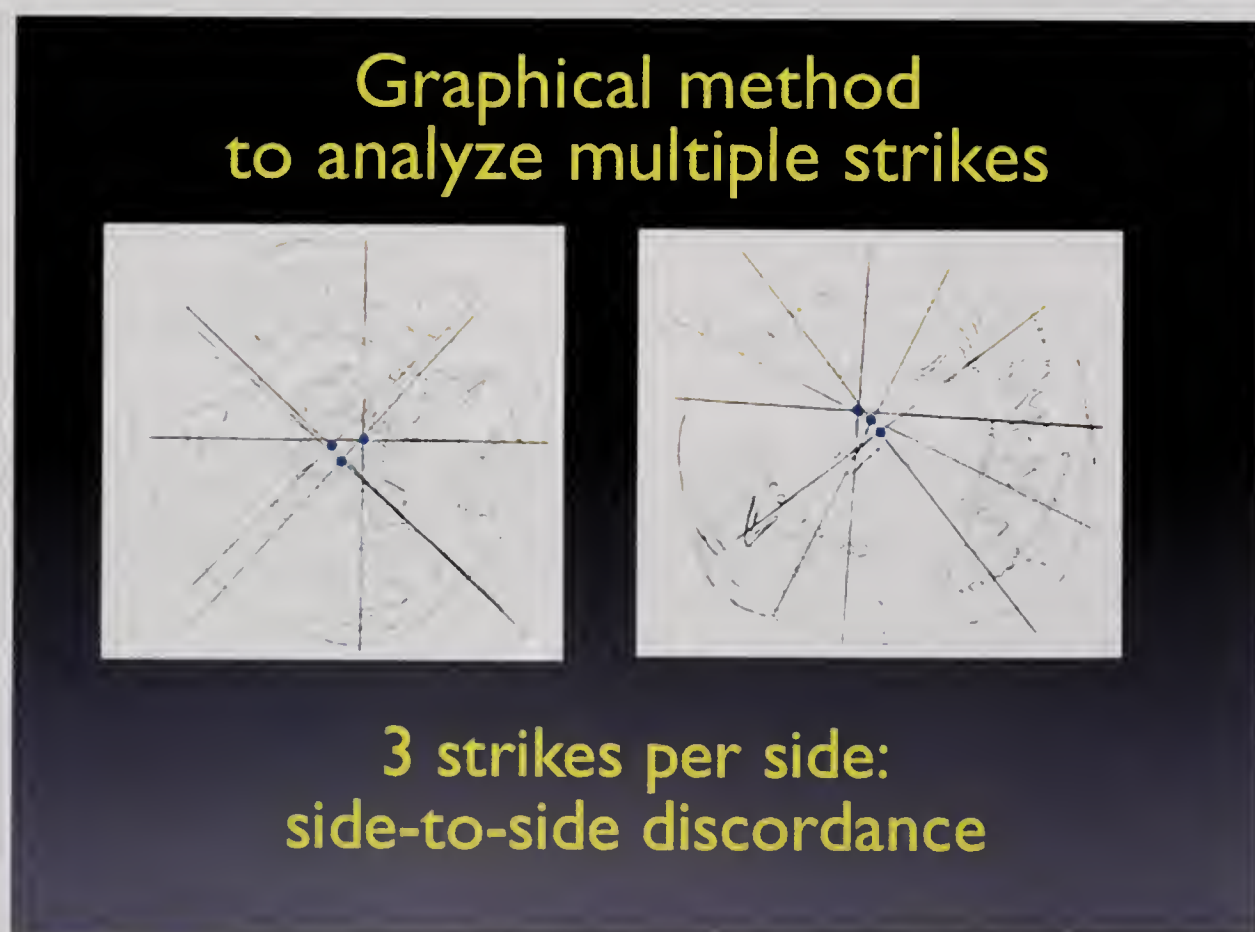
This process of superimposing the coin sketch over the projected image of the die reconstruction and tracing axes of a strike onto the coin sketch is repeated until all elements of the coin sketch have been matched to elements of the die reconstruction. We then see that the number of strikes equals the number of central dots.

We can assess die movement. Translation of the die between strikes—that is, movement of the die right and left and up and down along the coin surface - is shown by the pattern of central dots.

Rotation of the die between strikes is shown by differences in tilt of the orthogonal axes for the different strikes.

This entire process is done for both obverse and reverse. The results for the two sides of the coin are then compared.

For this coin we find three strikes each on obverse and reverse, with some rotation and translation of the die between strikes.



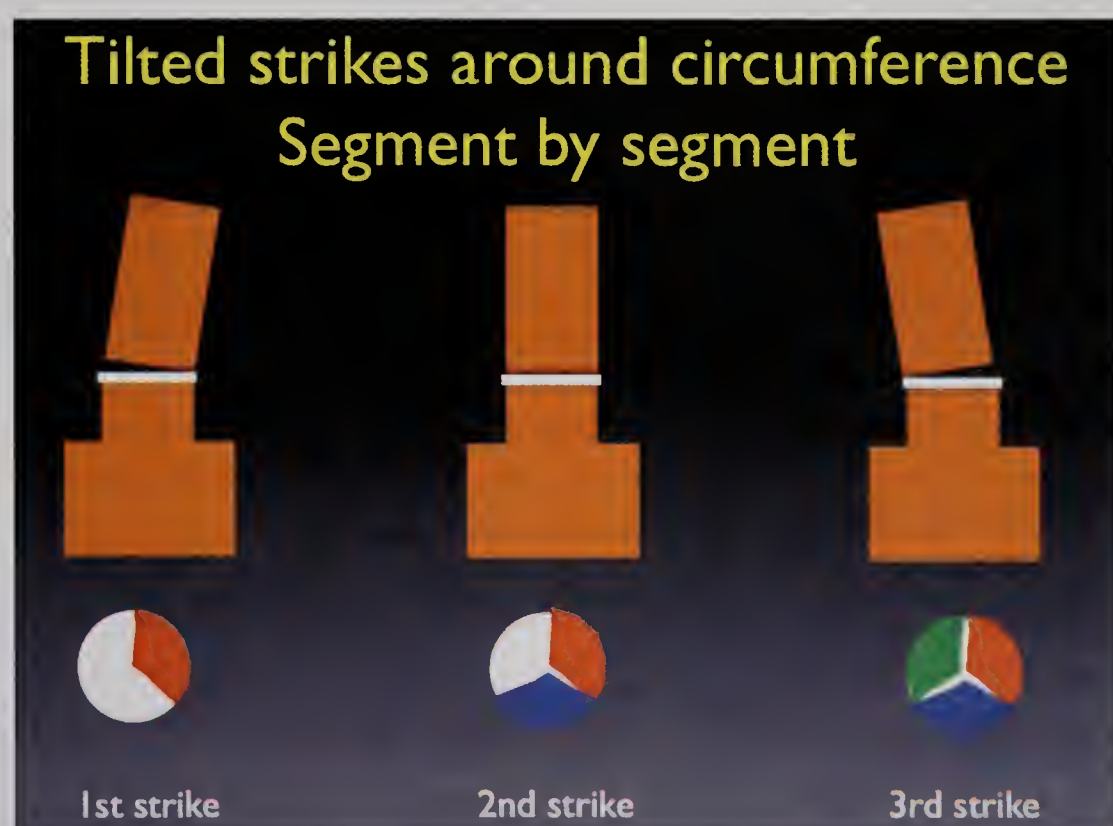
The most important thing to note is that **the amounts of both die translation and die rotation relative to the flan differ from obverse to reverse**. The pattern of central dots and tilt of the axes of the strikes both differ when comparing obverse and reverse strikes of the coin. In fact, the obverse and reverse strikes bear virtually no resemblance to one another! **This proves without doubt that the dies were not fixed in a minting machine, but were free to rotate and translate with respect to each other between strikes.** These findings are as expected for a hammering technique and prove without a doubt a hammering technique for the Willow Tree coins.

We'll now look at a few other aspects of Willow Tree coins that confirm a hammering technique and also show that **multiple strikes were routine and intentional**. We'll then discuss why this was necessary.

This Willow Tree shilling shows (especially on the reverse) well-struck wedge shaped areas, separated by linear areas that are softly struck. This pattern indicates that purposeful tilted strikes were made around the coin circumference to fill in the design.



As shown below, the pattern is caused by slight outward tilting of the hand-held die during a series of segmental strikes applied around the flan circumference.



Slight angling of the hand-held die reduces the effective surface area being struck by bringing a wedge-shaped portion of the die into contact with the flan. The coin design is filled in, segment-by-segment. This was clearly done intentionally.

This phenomenon is not unique for the Massachusetts Willow Tree coins. Edward Besly (longtime numismatic curator at the National Museum of Wales) has described exactly the same phenomenon on larger 17th century English hammered silver coins.¹⁵ It is seen very commonly with Willow tree coins and confirms that they were hammered.

The 2-B Willow Tree shilling illustrated below shows a sparser arrangement of well-struck outer areas (mostly segments of inscription) and poorly struck central elements - also reflecting outward tilting of the hand-held die during a series of peripheral strikes. Although lacking definition of central elements, this is, in fact, a wonderful coin, a beautiful high grade 2-B Willow Tree shilling, struck in excellent quality metal.



And this brings to mind a more general point: that although the Willow Tree coins appear unsatisfactory due to multiple hammer strikes, they're otherwise of high quality, in keeping with the NE, Oak Tree and Pine Tree coins.

COINAGE FABRIC AND METHOD OF FLAN PREPARATION

The fabric of the Willow Tree coins - the quality of the silver on which they were struck - was equal to that of the Oak Tree and Pine Tree coinage. This is not surprising. By the time they began minting silver coins, Hull and Sanderson already had many years

of experience in producing high quality silver. X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy data show that they generally maintained a purity exceeding sterling.¹⁶

So strong was their reputation that even in the next century Massachusetts Governor Hutchinson would observe: “It is certain that great care was taken to preserve the purity of the coin.”¹⁷ And as Lou Jordan noted, the average weight of Willow Tree shillings was within 1-2% of the average weights of the NE, Oak Tree, and Pine Tree shillings.¹⁸ This was a very competent enterprise. There was very strict quality control over the entire term of the Mint’s operations.

They were very good at producing sheets of high-grade silver for making silverware and for making the flans for their silver coins.

Flans were produced in a multistep process. First, silver ingots were cast in molds from silver objects and coins brought in by clients. The sterling silver ingots were then hammered down and planished by hand to a desired thickness. This was done on a large forging anvil. Individual flans were cut by hand with silversmith shears.

Contrary to what has often been asserted, no rolling machines or flatting mills were used to thin silver ingots. This was done entirely by hand. There was no equipment of that sort in the Massachusetts Mint. We know this for certain because we know that flatting mills to thin ingots to prescribed thickness would not even be available to silversmiths in the mother country until nearly a century later and they were not in widespread use in North America until well after the Revolution.¹⁹

Massachusetts silversmith Paul Revere got his flatting mill in November 1785, more than 100 years after the Massachusetts Mint ceased operations. Revere’s acquisition of the flatting mill is cited by economic historians as a landmark of the Industrial Revolution. He was among the first Americans to apply industrial methods, including his use of both flatting machinery and salaried employees to increase output and produce standardized, uniform items.²⁰ Before this era the use of flatting mills by American silversmiths was unheard of. The idea of a 17th century silversmith with a flatting mill is ahistorical and anachronistic.

But returning to the Willow Tree coins, with Hull and Sanderson’s obvious skill in working silver why did they have such difficulty hand-striking the Willow Tree coins? Why do we, in fact, never see a perfectly-struck Willow Tree coin of any denomination?

It all comes down to the physics of hammering.

THE PHYSICS OF HAMMERING

When viewed against the backdrop of history, it’s especially puzzling that Hull and Sanderson had such difficulty hand-striking the Willow Tree coins. After all, ancient coiners often used hammering to produce spectacular high relief works of numismatic art in gold and silver, as well as in much less malleable bronze alloys.

How were these ancient mints able to produce virtually perfect high relief hammered coins and why did Hull and Sanderson fail so utterly? Because the ancients struck their coins hot. That is, the flans were heated above their temperature of recrystallization, which enhanced the plastic flow of metal into the engraved recesses of the dies and prevented the flans from cracking.²¹

But 17th Century silversmiths did all of their finishing work in silver cold,²² including raising, engraving, chasing, embossing...and *striking*! Clearly, Hull and Sanderson cold struck their coins as they did when hammering their silverware with touchmarks, and in keeping with all of their prior training and experience. But in doing so they faced a significant limitation compared to ancient moneyers. The energy of their hammering technique was insufficient to produce traditional coins.

This is shown best by examining the dynamics involved. During striking, the kinetic energy of the hammer swing is transferred to the flan through the die's engraved face.

This kinetic energy is expressed as $\frac{1}{2} mv^2$, where **m** and **v** are the mass and velocity of the hammerhead. We see that strike energy is in direct proportion to the mass of the hammerhead and increases quadratically with the velocity or speed of the hammerhead. Hammer speed is increased most easily by using a longer hammer handle. The short-handle silversmith hammer, like the one shown below, and the way it was normally used, certainly limited hammer speed during cold striking by Massachusetts coiners. This, in turn, limited the amount of energy available for striking.

Physics of hammering

Kinetic energy of hammer induces plastic flow of metal into die recesses

Kinetic energy of hammer:

$$E = \frac{1}{2} mv^2$$



On impact, the kinetic energy of the hammerhead induces flow of metal into the engraved recesses of the die. In general, the smaller the die's surface area the more effective the strike. Specifically, reducing a round die's diameter by one-half *quadruples* the amount of energy delivered to the flan per unit area. That is, in comparing two dies, one with half the diameter of the other, the smaller die (with half the diameter) is 4x as effective during striking, because this die has one-fourth the surface area of the larger die.

When examining NE shillings, Noe found that: "...in spite of the small size of these punches, a perfectly clear or entirely complete impression...is rare." Noe's observation that the NE shilling punches are barely useful as dies becomes a critical complicating factor for striking Willow Tree coins.

Physics of hammering

NE punches barely useful as dies



NE area:
 120 mm^2



XII area:
 56 mm^2

As we saw earlier, on a given NE shilling the XII is more deeply impressed than the NE monogram. The disparity is often less glaring than in this case, but, in general, the NE impression is noticeably shallower, its surface area being twice that of the XII impression, as shown on this slide. These results are typical and we see, with the relatively soft NE impression, that the NE punch provides a useful reference: it represents the upper limit of useful size for hammered dies at the Massachusetts Mint. Use a larger die and you're certain to run into trouble. This is exactly what we find with the Willow Tree dies, which are larger than NE punches, significantly larger.

Here are the Willow Tree die surface areas.²³:

Willow Tree die areas

NE punch: 120 mm²

XII punch: 56 mm²

Willow Tree shilling: 707 mm²

Willow Tree sixpence: 346 mm²

Willow Tree threepence: 201 mm²

Willow Tree shilling dies, at 6x the surface area of the marginally useful NE punches, are very unfavorable for cold striking with a silversmith's hammer. This disadvantage is further compounded by the fact that metal must now flow into two dies at the same time for a Willow Tree strike. This means that the NE punch is at least 6x as effective as a Willow Tree shilling die, and up to 12x as effective when considering that two Willow Tree dies are used simultaneously.

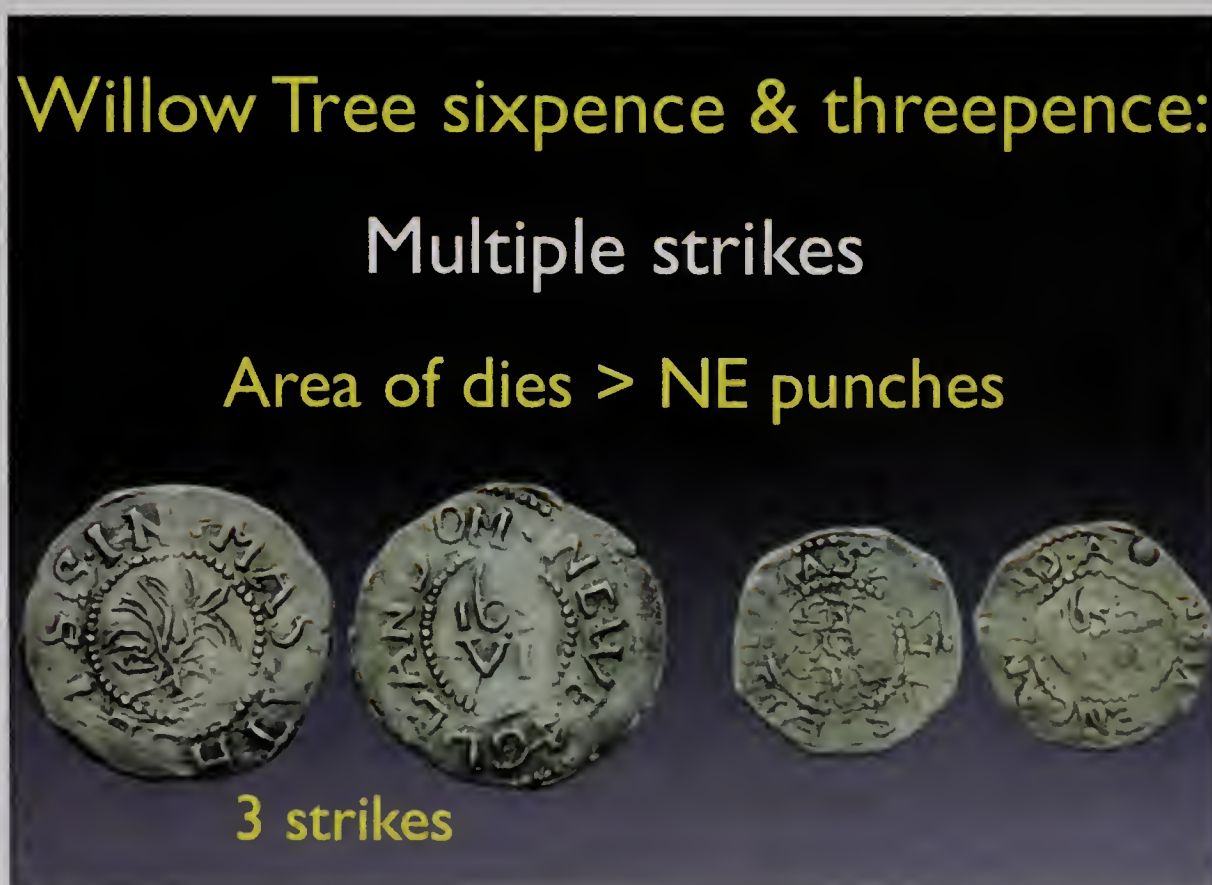
MULTIPLE PARTIAL STRIKES ON WILLOW TREE COINS

The data are consistent with what we see with Willow Tree shillings and help to explain why they show multiple partial strikes. Multiple partial strikes were done to compensate for what would otherwise be unacceptably soft images with a full die strike. These multiple partial strikes were used as a routine to *piece together* the coin design, however imperfectly.



What about the Willow Tree sixpence and threepence? Sixpence and threepence dies fare no better. Cold striking was still ineffective. Multiple strikes remain the rule, because the sixpence dies - and even the threepence dies - have significantly larger surface areas than our reference, the NE punches.

Incidentally, when you analyze graphically the particular Willow Tree sixpence illustrated below you find that, like the shillings, it required three strikes. Obverse and reverse strikes show random discordance, confirming a hammering technique.



THE NEED FOR A COINING MACHINE

After the transition from the NE to the Willow Tree coinage it quickly became clear that cold hand striking was not working. The results were intolerable. Alternatives were sought.

Hull acquired, or, more precisely, *imported* a rocker press, no doubt after consulting his business contacts in London. It was necessary to import sophisticated, specialized hardware. Such goods were not yet produced in the Bay Colony. Hull imported his coining press the same way he did all of his tools and other supplies. As Barbara McLean Ward has emphasized: “Boston’s earliest silversmiths had to obtain their tools from England.”²⁴

With importation a necessity, there was no better person to pull it off than John Hull himself. He was the most important mercantile figure in the Bay Colony.²⁵ Over the span of his professional life Mintmaster Hull fostered an elaborate network of international trade.²⁶ He actively imported a variety of goods, both related to the silversmith trade and not. He is known to have sold silversmith tools and equipment to others, including his former apprentice Jeremiah Dummer. He owned fourteen ships and used thirty others in his trading activities, importing tools, iron, armaments, hats, clothing, textiles, salt, wine and sugar from a number of countries. He exported timber, wood products, and horses.

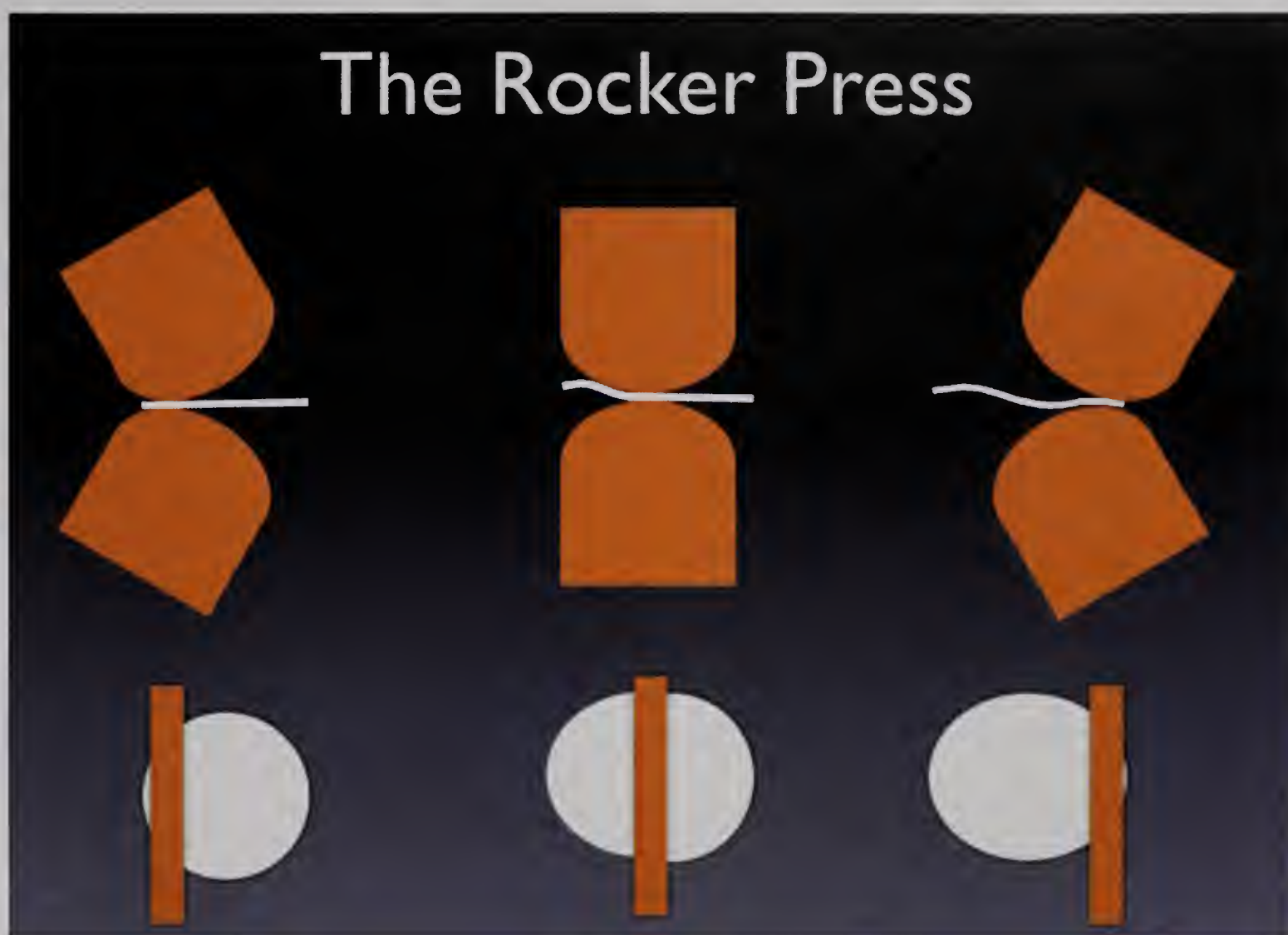
Hull travelled to England many times, forging important business contacts, such as those he made with London goldsmiths, from whom he obtained all of his equipment.²⁷ Mint director Hull was undoubtedly involved directly with purchasing and importing the rocker press.

Despite what is often surmised, Hull (or some other local) did not engineer, design, and build a complex minting machine (especially one of a kind that required many years of development on the European Continent to perfect). There was no need to reinvent the wheel. Hull just did what he always did when requiring equipment of the simplest or most sophisticated type: this highly experienced, world-class merchant and importer imported the rocker press.

THE ROCKER PRESS

What exactly is this machine? The rocker press²⁸ is a type of rotary press. It impresses an image on a flan through the rocking motion of dies with convex curved faces. Because of the rocking motion of curved dies only a small fraction of the curved die surface is in contact with the flan at any time. Because the energy of striking is concentrated the rocker press very efficiently produces a strong image on the coin surface.

At the top of the figure (below) we see, viewed from the side, the flan entering the press; being squeezed by the rocking dies; and exiting the press with a wavy configuration.



At the bottom of the figure we see the corresponding views of the flan from above. On each of these images the portion of the die in contact with the flan is represented by the orange bar. Only a small linear part of the curved die is in contact with the flan at any given time. The energy of the strike is thus concentrated, producing a well-struck image with relatively little effort.

Note also how the flan enters the press with a circular configuration and exits as an oval, due to stretching by the squeeze of the rocking convex dies. This squeeze leads to very distinctive and interesting effects.

ROCKER PRESS EFFECTS

Rocker press coins display several notable features, including changes in the shape of the struck image and changes in the edges and overall shape of the flan. The most notable change is a **stretching** of the coin design along its vertical axis. Another prominent rocker press effect is an overall **waviness** of the flan.

Rocker Press Effects

- Stretching along vertical axis
- Wavy flan morphology
- Flan thinning/defects, 12:00 / 6:00
- Smearing of design, 12:00 / 6:00

Besides these properties affecting the coin as a whole there are also some localized effects, and they arise because there is much greater force - much greater squeeze per unit area - at the narrow beginning and narrow end of a strike, near the top and bottom edges of the coin.²⁹ This frequently causes *marked changes at the 6:00 and 12:00 positions* of the coins, such as **thinning** of the flan, **damage** to the edge of the flan, and **smearing** of the design.

THE INNER CIRCLE INDEX DIVERSITY WITHIN VARIETIES

Stretching quantified: The Inner Circle Index (ICI)



1-A Oak Tree shilling

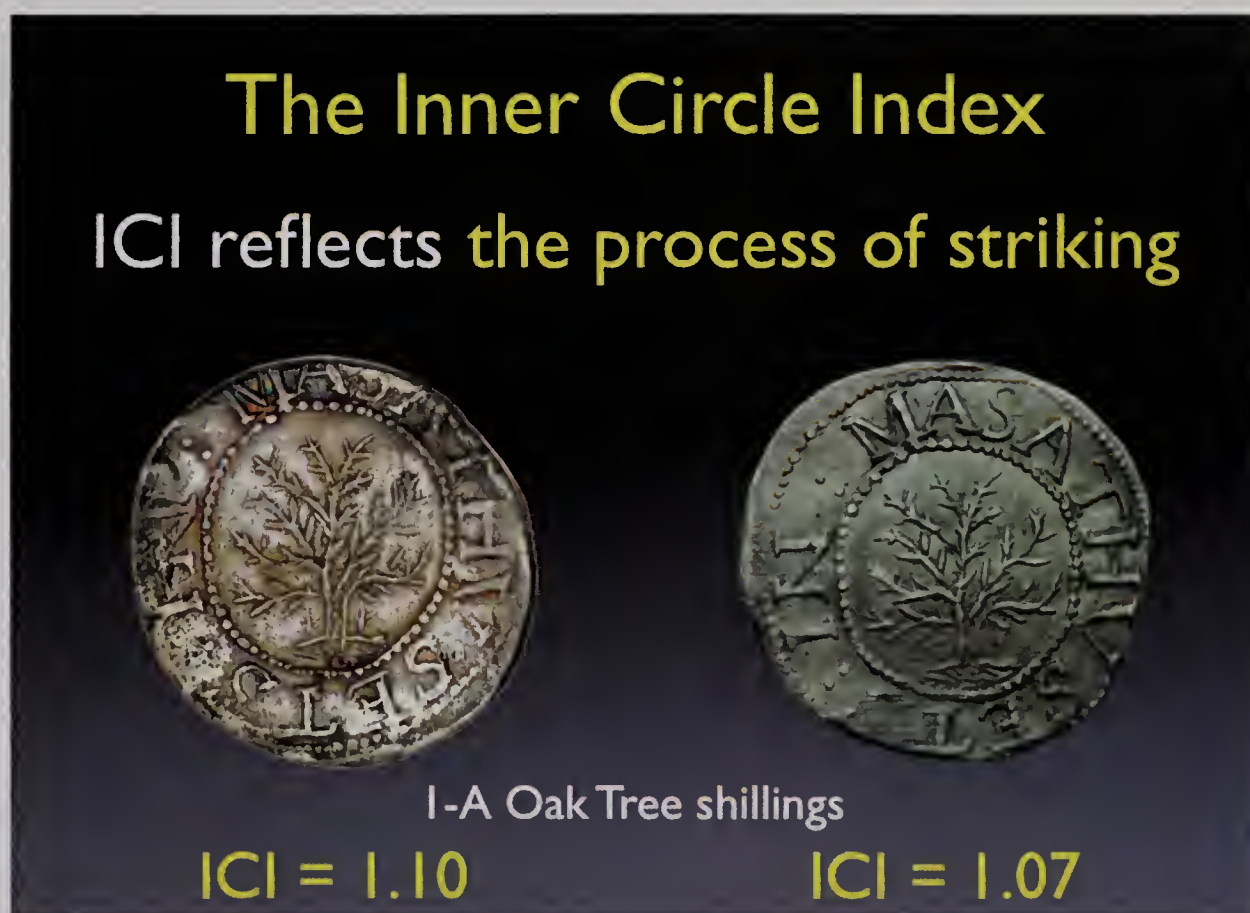
ICI = 1.09

$$\text{ICI} = \frac{\text{Vert. diameter of inner circle}}{\text{Horiz. diameter of inner circle}}$$

Interestingly, the overall stretching of rocker press coin designs can be measured and quantified. The Inner Circle Index (ICI) is the ratio of the vertical and horizontal diameters of the inner circle of dots.

If you, for instance, had a coin with a perfectly round inner circle of dots the vertical and horizontal diameters would be equal and their ratio, the ICI, would = 1.0. Because rocker press coins stretch along the vertical axis their ICIs are usually >1.0. For example, the beautiful 1-A Oak Tree shilling seen above has an ICI of 1.09.

These two other examples of the 1-A Oak Tree shilling variety, below, have respective ICIs of 1.10 and 1.07.



Look at them closely. These coins are not alike! See how different their inner circles are. And look at their trees. They have completely different trees. But they are both struck with the same dies.

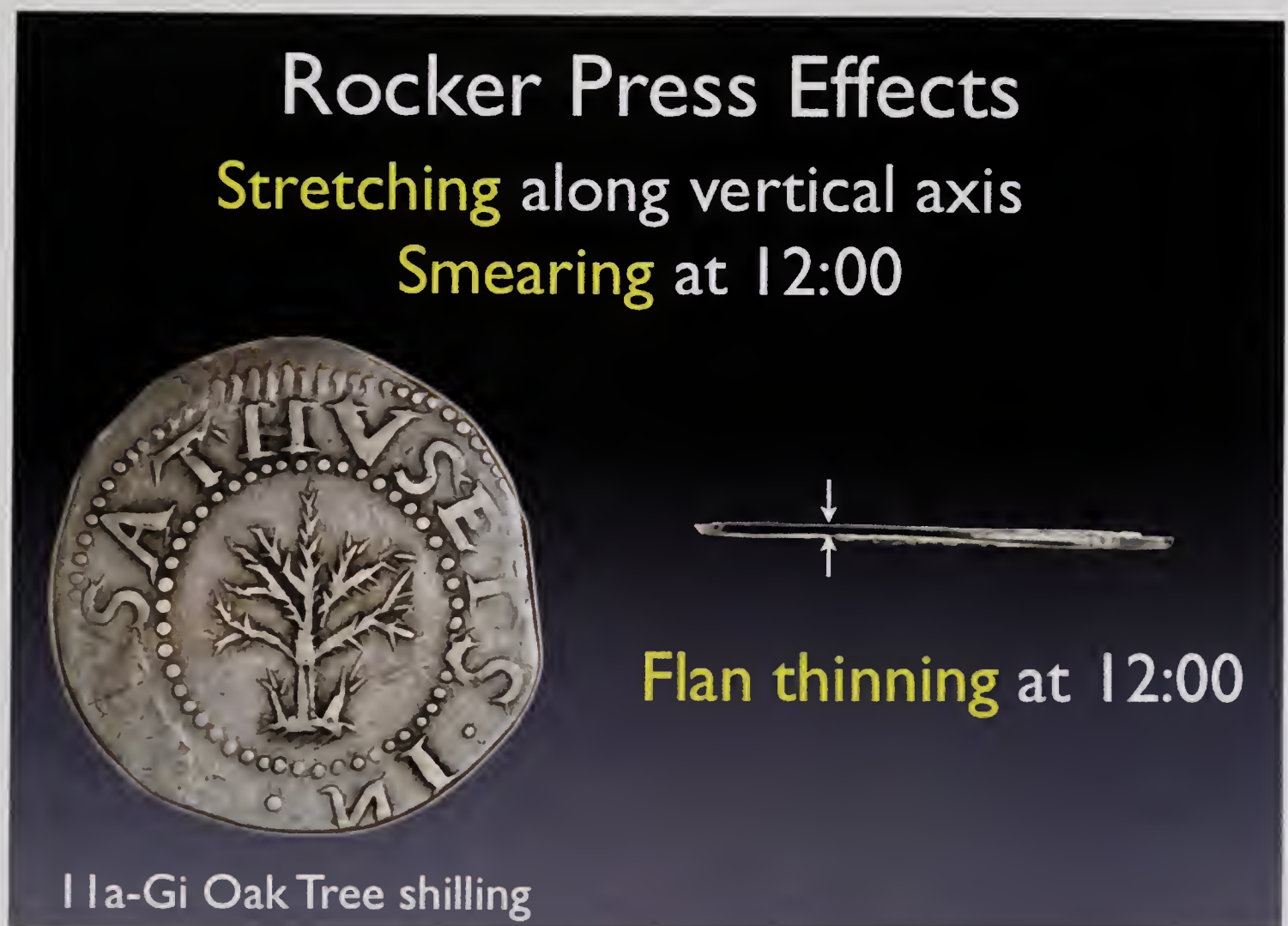
How is this possible? How can different examples of the same variety look so different from one another and have different ICIs? Because the ICI - the amount of stretch that a rocker press coin has - is a consequence of the *process* of striking - and is not a fixed property of the engraved design. The elongation of the inner circle depends on the amount of squeeze induced by the rocker press dies, and this varies with flan thickness.

Which brings us back to the method of flan preparation. If flans were cut from silver sheets precisely thinned by flatting mills we wouldn't expect such marked variability in ICI between examples of the same variety, because flans would be of

uniform thickness. The fact that we see variability virtually from specimen to specimen of a given variety is consistent with flans cut from silver sheets planished by hand. As always, the coins provide the strongest evidence. Note also how sensitive the ICI is relative to our perceptions and how a change in ICI of only 0.03 translates into such a noticeable change in the appearance of a coin. No comparable metric exists for waviness, edge defects, and smearing—rocker press effects that also vary essentially uniquely in degree for each coin as they arise from the inherent irregularities of hand-planished flans.

EXAMPLES OF ROCKER PRESS EFFECTS

The following coin shows several rocker press effects:



There is stretching along the vertical axis with an oval inner circle, smearing of the outer dots at 12:00, and flan thinning at 12:00, implied by the appearance of the coin near its upper edge when viewed *en face* and confirmed when viewing the coin edgewise.

The coin in the next figure shows flan defects at 6:00 and 12:00; smearing at 12:00; elongation of design with an oval inner circle and an ICI of 1.03; and flan waviness, seen better on the reverse image in the way light plays on the coin surface. An appealing feature of high-grade rocker press coins like this one is seeing how light reflects off their curved surfaces when tilted back and forth.

Rocker Press Effects



4-Di large planchet
Pine Tree shilling

Flan waviness can also be appreciated when viewing rocker press coins edgewise. The edge view in the next figure is oriented from 12:00 toward 6:00, with obverse down. If you look closely, THV of Massachusetts is partially visible because of flan waviness. The edge view also shows the complex nature of the waviness.

Flan waviness



9a-Fii Oak Tree shilling



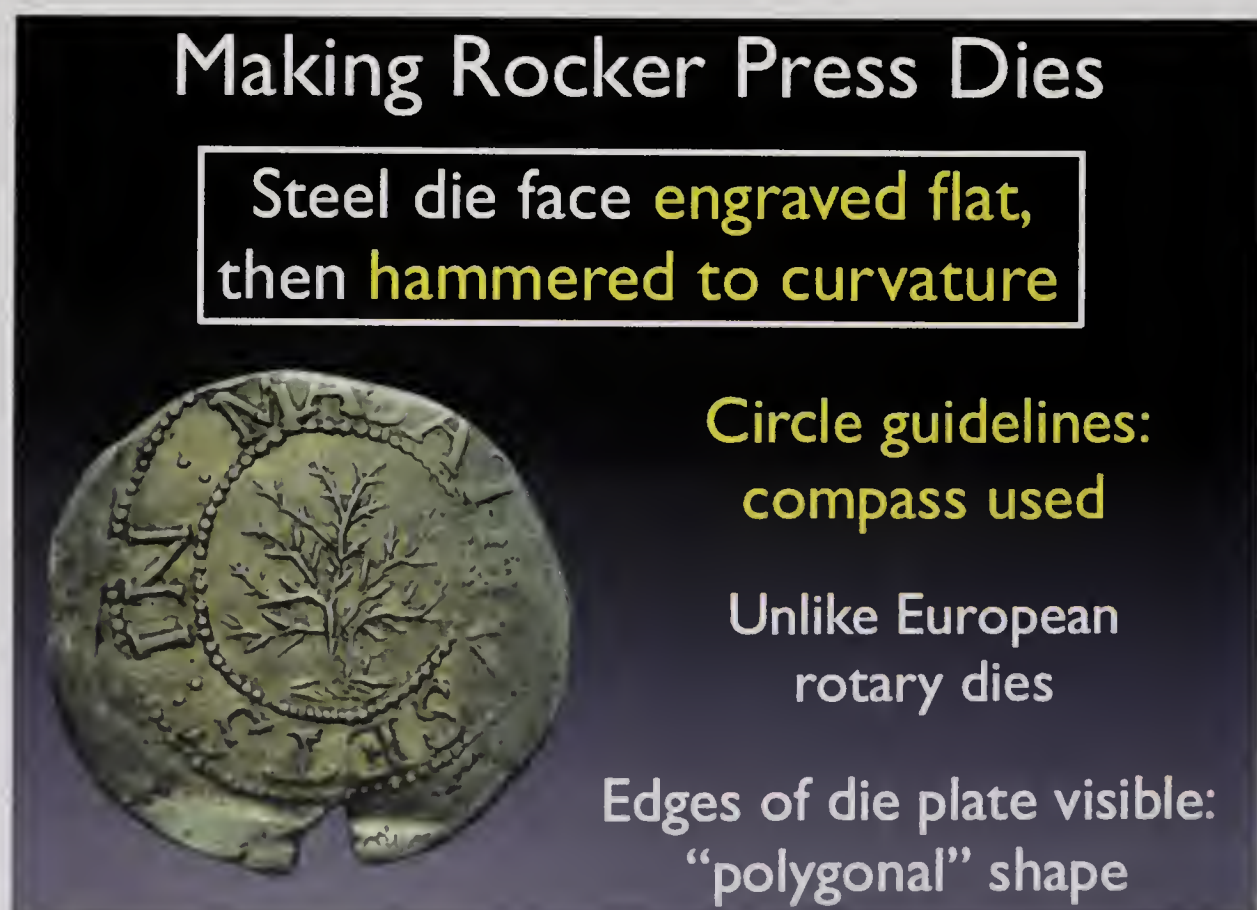
The next coin shows both extremes along the spectrum of rocker press edge defects. There is severe flan disruption at 12:00 and subtle flan distortion at 6:00. Mild degrees of flan distortion may sometimes only be seen well when viewing a coin edgewise. The affected edge will appear slightly granular due to disruption of the silver's

crystal lattice.



UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF MASSACHUSETTS ROCKER PRESS DIES

This 1-C Oak Tree shilling demonstrates stretching along the vertical axis with an oval inner circle and flan failure at 6:00. The coin also has many features that shed light on how rocker press dies were made, yet another example of how the coins tell the story best.



A central dot and guidelines for the inner and outer circles are visible—indicating that a compass was used to create them—and that the circles of dots were therefore engraved on a flat surface as true circles. The engraved steel sheet of the die face was then hammered to a convex curvature appropriate for rocker press use, the curvature oriented along the vertical axis of the coin design. This procedure avoids the intrinsic difficulties of engraving directly onto a curved surface.³⁰

The rocker die face, engraved flat and then curved by hammering, was then likely attached to a wrought iron shank by forge welding (an ancient technique well-known to silversmiths and commonly used in die production³¹).

It's important to note that curved European rocker dies do not show center marks or inner circle guidelines,³² unlike regular flat-faced European dies, and unlike the rocker dies of Massachusetts. The above-described method of Massachusetts Mint rocker die manufacture represents an innovation in die preparation without parallel in Europe, and an ingenious solution to a problem using simple and familiar techniques.

Note on this coin that with displacement of the obverse die upward and to the right we can see the linear left and bottom edges of the steel plate of the die surface, as well as its truncated corner, giving it a polygonal shape.

This displacement of the obverse die is characteristic 1-C Oak Tree shillings. Many rocker press varieties have their own characteristic die misalignments.



On the left is another 1-C Oak Tree shilling, in a more advanced die state, showing obverse die displacement upward and to the right. In the middle is a 2-D Oak Tree shilling with the downward displacement of the obverse die characteristic for this variety, especially obvious on this coin because of its oversized flan. And on the right is a 3-D Oak Tree shilling. This variety usually shows downward obverse die displacement with flan thickening at 12:00.

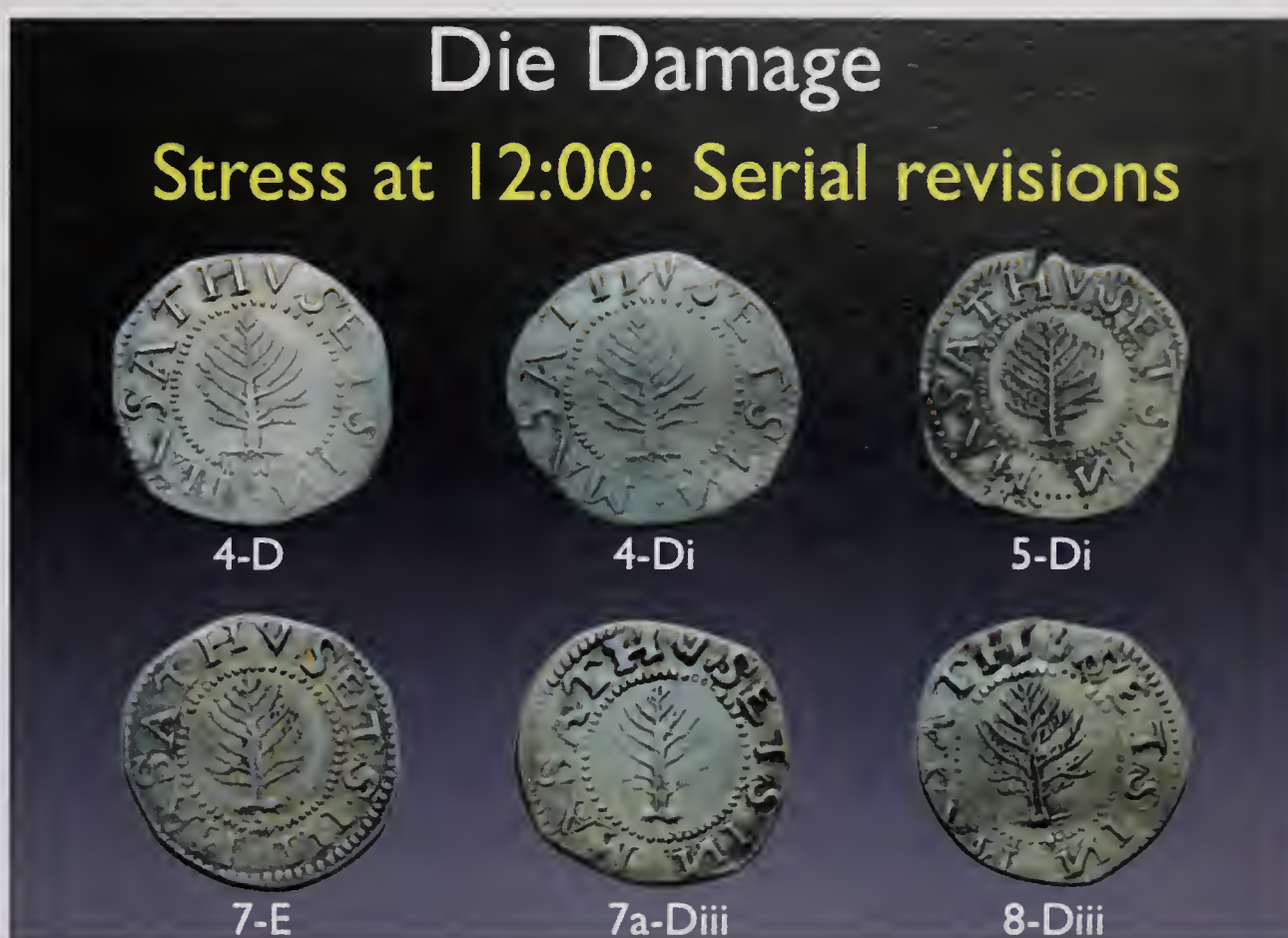
Here's another 3-D Oak Tree shilling that shows, in the oblique view, the downward displacement of the obverse die.



The thickening of the flan at 12:00 is marked by the arrow on the side view. Note also the slight sinusoidal waviness of the flan, as a rocker press effect. The slight thinning of the flan at 6:00 is also a rocker press effect.

PATTERNS OF DIE DAMAGE EXPLAINED

We saw earlier that the rocker press puts particular stress on flans at the 6:00 and 12:00 positions. That being the case, as an equal and opposite effect we might expect excessive stress and strain on dies at, say, the 12:00 position; and this is exactly what we often see, especially on obverse dies at 12:00, where marked local die stressors often result in repeated re-engraving and die revisions.



So we see for this series of consecutive Pine Tree shilling varieties that there is repeated re-cutting of the obverse lettering near 12:00. These changes are seen best when comparing the 1st and last varieties in the group.

In other cases the greatest mechanical stress on a rocker press die occurs at the apex of its convex curvature, around the middle of the coin design.



For the 2-C large planchet Pine Tree shilling excessive stress at the apex of the curved obverse die caused failure of the tree, which was re-engraved to yield the 3-C obverse. Note that the lettering is preserved and untouched and that on the 2-C there are no rocker press effects at 6:00 or 12:00 (and only slight smearing of outer circle dots at 12:00 on the 3-C variety).

THE SCREW PRESS

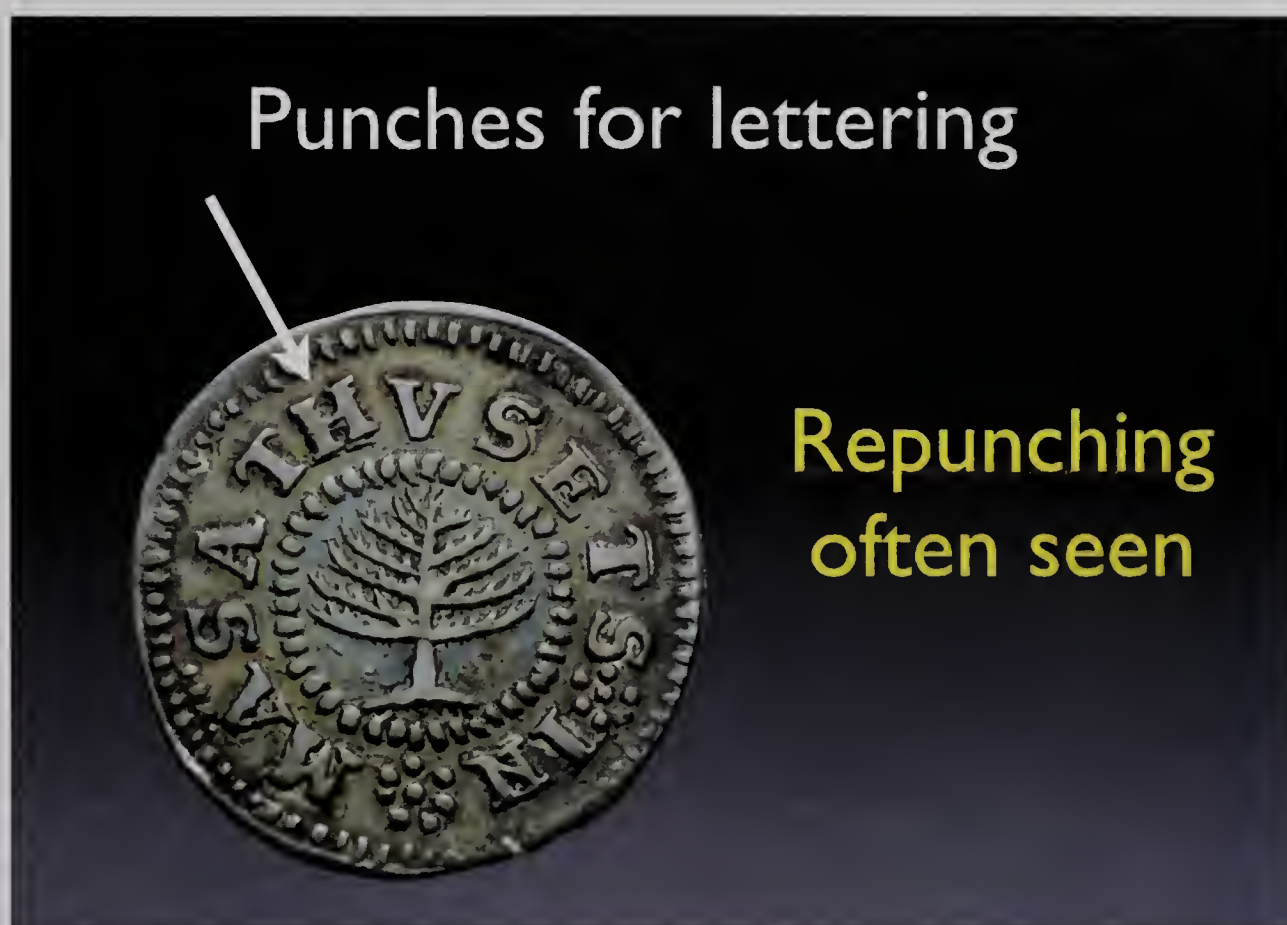
We have traced the development of Massachusetts silver minting techniques from the direct transfer to the NE coin coinage of the cold-hammering technique used for applying touchmarks on silverware, to a modified cold-striking technique with routine multiple hammer strikes piecing together the design of the Willow Tree coins in an imperfect manner, to the wonderfully made Oak Tree and large planchet Pine Tree coins which bear the idiosyncrasies of their rocker press origins. But there is a final group of coins that we've not mentioned that shows a final step in technical evolution and an altogether different method of striking.

I'm referring, of course, to the small planchet Pine Tree shillings, struck with a screw press, an ingenious machine. The screw press multiplies the applied manual force with a lever-operated screw mechanism. It was developed in Florence in the early 16th Century and was first used to strike coins by the great sculptor and goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini, who described its use in detail.³³



The small planchet Pine Tree shillings are the only Massachusetts silver coins struck on a screw press and were the last issue of the Massachusetts Mint. Their flans are generally more uniform than those of the earlier coinage and may have been (at least sometimes) punched with a small blanking press.

The small planchet Pine Tree shillings lack the features characteristic of rocker press coins. Although simple in design, the small planchet Pine Tree shillings show some more sophisticated aspects, such as the punches used for lettering on many dies. In some cases (and actually fairly frequently) repunchings may be seen.



Slight die misalignments are common, but frank double strikes and other major technical glitches are fairly rare for the small planchet Pine Tree shillings, and, overall, I think it's fair to say that the small planchet Pine Tree shillings are the most regular and consistent of all the Massachusetts silver coins.

CONCLUSION

With the screw press we've reached the final step in a three decade long evolution of minting techniques at the Massachusetts Mint.

This progression in experience and technical proficiency at the Massachusetts Mint is reminiscent of what occurred in 17th century Europe, where the problematic multiple and poor strikes of hand-hammering prompted the development of mechanized minting techniques and led to use of rotary³⁴ and screw presses,³⁵ with the screw press ultimately becoming the dominant mode of coining.

This evolution in European minting methods was recapitulated in 17th century Massachusetts, with hand striking replaced by rotary techniques that were ultimately supplanted by the screw press.



No other American coinage can match the Silver Coins of Massachusetts for the diversity of their appearance, a consequence of an array of minting techniques employed over a period of many years in a process of improvement and innovation.

No other coinage can match the Silver Coins of Massachusetts in their historical primacy, or their style and charm. None display the fascinating physical characteristics of the rocker press varieties or the curious features of the Willow Tree coins. It is indeed wonderful that we can collect and appreciate in so many ways these remarkable coins, America's first and greatest coinage!

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3-C OAK TREE SIXPENCE

ENDNOTES

1. Crosby 1875, 46; Clarke 1937, 678-9; Noe 1943, 22.
2. Noe 1943, 27.
3. Breen 1988, 12; Mossman 1993, 86.
4. Stack's 2005, 24.
5. Stack's 2002, 21; Jordan 2002, 91.
6. Kane 1987, 199-200.
7. Kane 1998, 45-48.
8. Jordan 2002, 10; Kane 1987, 52.
9. Crosby 1875, 34-38.
10. Ward 1998, 10-19.
11. Noe 1943, 7.
12. Noe 1943, 17-18, plates VIII-XIV.
13. Salmon 2010, 58-9.
14. Salmon 2010, 56-7, 60-1.
15. Besly 1993, 123.
16. Kane 1987, 5, Appendix A.
17. Hutchinson 1936, 152.
18. Jordan 2002, 59.
19. Ward 1998, 10-11.
20. Kane 1998, 805-6.
21. Kraay 1966, 17; Vagi 1999, 157.
22. Ward 1998, 10-19.
23. Salmon 2010, 67.
24. Ward 1998, 25.
25. Valeri 2009, 61.
26. Bailyn 1979, 91.
27. Kane 1987, 105, 107.
28. Cooper 1988, 61-7; Sellwood 1993, 109.
29. Cooper 1988, 64.
30. Gaspar 1993, 134.
31. Cooper 1988, 28-9, 33; Thompson 1993, 146-7.
32. Sellwood 1993, 112.
33. Cooper 1988, 51-2.
34. Besly 1993, 119.
35. Cooper 1988, 51-60.



CAUDLE CUP, C. 1670

